

LEADERSHIP IN THE CHINESE COMMUNIST ARMY

A thesis presented to the Faculty of the U.S. Army  
Command and General Staff College in partial  
fulfillment of the requirements of the  
degree of

MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCES

A.P. DE LUCA, Major, U. S. Army.

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The study of the military systems of nations past and present has long been of primary interest to those in the profession of arms. The writings of history have greatly eased the difficulty of such study through their compilation and evaluation of the events of times past. However, when it comes to the study of the military system of Communist China, history is of little value because, first, the Chinese Communist Army is a new and changing army and, second, the information available to the world outside Communist China is restricted, carefully screened, and barely distinguishable as either fact or fiction. Despite these limitations, this study is an attempt to evaluate the leadership in the Chinese Communist Army today through an historical analysis of certain leadership elements--the leadership environment, the soldier, and the leader.

Military leadership in Communist China is exercised in an environment which emphasizes a policy of Communist Party supremacy over the military. To achieve this supremacy, the Party has provided for a system of collective leadership within the armed forces whereby decisions at most levels are made by Party branches or committees composed of the leading Party members within the unit. To execute these decisions, the Party has established a dual system of command, one military and the other political. With this dual chain of command there is a division of responsibility so that the military commander is responsible for the implementation of military decisions, while the political commander executes decisions relating to political work.

Political control over the armed forces is maintained through constant political indoctrination. In training, political subjects occupy a major portion of the allotted time. Because of modernization in the army and because of the need for greater emphasis on military training brought about by advanced technology, a conflict arose between the political and military leaders over the soldier's time. In a system which depends primarily on political indoctrination for its effectiveness, this conflict was resolved in favor of the political leaders and became a source of dissatisfaction to the military leadership.

Adding to this dissatisfaction has been the disruption of the modernization of the army as a result of faulty economic policies of the Communist government. These policies--the Great Leap Forward and the system of communes--resulted in a decrease in troop morale and a serious shortage of military supplies and equipment. Compounding the criticality of these effects was a growing resentment of the military leaders towards the Party leadership because of the diversion of military manpower to the performance of nonmilitary tasks. Together with a growing rift between Communist China and the Soviet Union which brought a virtual halt to the receipt of modern military equipment, the sum total of these Party actions was a decline in the combat readiness of the armed forces in 1959. To an officer corps that had begun to achieve a degree of professionalism this decline triggered resentment of Party interference in military affairs. Through a campaign of purge and rectification, and by increased political indoctrination of the officer corps, the tendency of the officer corps towards professionalism was halted and the political supremacy over the armed forces was emphasized.

Despite the obstacles to military leadership that the environment presents, the military leader in the Chinese Communist Army benefits from many aspects of the Communist system in the exercise of his command functions. To begin with, he is given a soldier who is willing to serve, is physically capable, and has been accustomed to a life of hardship. The political reliability of this soldier and the constant indoctrination of the Communist control system insures his ready responsiveness to the demands of the Party leaders. The favorable treatment of the soldier adds to the desirability of army service and promotes a willingness to follow orders. With the basic education that the soldier receives prior to beginning his military training, he is capable of absorbing the technical instruction necessary in a modern army.

On the negative side, the average soldier is a conscriptee who is returned to civilian life at about the time he is properly trained. This presents a requirement for a constant and intense training cycle during which the military leader competes unsuccessfully with political demands for valuable training time. Further negating the leadership position of the officer is the tool which the Party uses to maintain the morale of the soldiers, that is the emphasis on the democratic nature of the army, a principle which tends to destroy the prestige of the officer and lower his morale. Under this principle, the soldier has the right to openly criticize the leadership and express dissatisfaction over the actions of the commanders. Although the existence of policies such as this might draw criticism from other modern armies, the Chinese Communists have been successful in building a soldier who, willing or not, is capable of waging war in furtherance of the Party's objectives.

As for the leader himself, he has been the victim of the Communist system and of the Party's measures to maintain the loyalty of the soldiers. Although the officer corps has succeeded in obtaining a system of ranks that provides some distinction from the rank-and-file, it has been unable to emerge as a separate and distinct class of professional militarists. Modernization demanded an army which was completely devoted to military affairs, and an officer corps with the professionalism to exercise leadership of that army. With the threat that any such professionalism posed to continued Party leadership and supremacy over the army, measures were taken by the Party to reemphasize its belief in the system of collective leadership and the traditional unity of the officers and men. The officers had criticized collective leadership as being unsuitable to the rendering of the swift decisions required by modern warfare, and democracy as failing to provide the discipline necessary to survive on the battlefield of the future. These measures have apparently succeeded in maintaining the officer in a position as executor of Party policy and decisions and preventing his emergence as an individual leader.

A summation of the characteristics of the leadership environment, the soldier, and the leader, provides a picture of the military leadership of the Chinese Communist Army. It is a type of leadership quite unlike that in existence in any of the Western armies. Except in extreme emergency when the commander is authorized to exercise individual leadership, the army is operated under a system whereby decisions are made by Party branches and committees and executed through a dual chain of command--one military, the other political. The effect of this system is the

destruction or at least submergence of any tendencies towards individual leadership. The system is not one which fosters initiative or promotes personal ambition among the officers, nor does it lend itself to the development of decisions.

The personal effectiveness of the military commander as a leader is dependent in large measure on his standing within the Party, his influence with the Party branch or committee, and his relationship with his political counterpart who is theoretically his equal but actually occupies a position of dominance. The military commander bears the responsibility for the military affairs of the unit but lacks the corresponding authority and prestige to accomplish his tasks through personal leadership. Because of the stress on democracy within the army, and the gap between the military leader and the soldier caused by the image of the political commander as the benefactor of the men, there is an absence of any sound relationship between the military commander and his men on which potential individual military leadership may be built. The loyalty of the soldier is to the Party rather than to the unit or its commander. Esprit de corps is not fostered for its development would focus attention on the more capable officers and give them a power which the Party does not want them to have.

It is concluded that the typical commander is an individual dedicated to his profession and aware of the complexities of modern war. His desire to achieve maximum proficiency of his unit is handicapped by the many factors which are at the same time the strength of the Communist system, namely the dependency on political control for all decisions, the use of the systems of collective leadership and dual command, the maintenance of the morale of the soldier at the expense of

causing dissatisfaction among the officers, adherence to the principle of democracy within the army and stress on leadership by patient persuasion, and the continuing use of the army for nonmilitary tasks. He is impatient with Party policies that have brought a halt to modernization and prevented the modern equipping of his unit; he is fearful that continued reliance on outdated military doctrine will be fatal in a general war situation; he is frustrated by the responsibility which he bears for the success of his unit without having control over the many factors that will achieve or prevent that success.

In future combat the effectiveness of the military leadership will depend on the efficiency of the Party and the control system it has established more so than on the personal characteristics of the commander. Should the political system fail or break down at any point, and should the leadership responsibility fall directly on the military commander, the degree to which he has permitted political requirements to overshadow his attempts at professional excellence may well determine victory or defeat.

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## PREFACE

The study of the military systems of nations past and present has long been of primary interest to those in the profession of arms. The writings of history have greatly eased the difficulty of such study through their compilation and evaluation of the events of past times. Unfortunately, such historical materials are not available in any abundance to the student of the military history of the Chinese Communist Army. The reason for this is twofold:

First, to qualify as history, events must stand the test of time. The Chinese Communist Army, which had its official birth in 1927, is a new and changing army. Its growth, marked by its close association with Communist ideology and the principle of political control, is not easy to analyze and evaluate. The foundations upon which the Chinese Communist Army is based are unlike those of the major powers of the past with which we might make comparison.

Secondly, Communist China is a totalitarian state, shrouded in mystery and jealously guarding its state secrets. The information available to the outside world from Red China is both restricted and carefully screened, thereby seriously compounding the difficulty of sorting fact from fiction, or truth from propaganda.

Despite these limitations, this study is an attempt to evaluate the leadership in the Chinese Communist Army today through an historical analysis of those elements of leadership--the leadership environment, the

leader, and the led--as they developed with the growth of the army. Emphasis will be on the post-1949 period when the Communists had full control of the mainland, and the years immediately following the Korean War in which the necessity for modernization of the army first became evident.

Among the sources of material that form the basis of this study are translations from the China mainland press. There is the danger in the use of such sources that the Communists might allow publication of only those articles that will lead us to believe what they want us to believe. In addition, what the Communists say and what they actually do may be two entirely different courses.

Availability of reports of personal experiences are quite limited, especially following the Korean War. Despite the vast number of refugees that have fled the mainland in recent years, few have any real knowledge of the inner workings of the military and very few of the defectors have been soldiers. Those few "privileged" persons who have been granted permission to visit Red China in recent years, such as Field Marshal Montgomery, whose reports of the visit were quite glowing, and Mr. Edgar Snow, author of the book The Other Side of the River, who had been in China during the Civil War and who was invited to return to interview many of the revolutionary leaders that he had interviewed during the revolution were undoubtedly given a carefully planned and conducted tour of the type not unfamiliar to us in the military.

A valuable source of information consisting of Party directives to commanders at the regimental level and above was recently made available to scholars in the original Chinese edition. Although the unclassified official translation is still being conducted at the Hoover Institute

Stanford University in California, these directives form an important source for this study by way of a paper prepared by Professor Ralph L. Powell of American University based on his own translation of the directives, and submitted to the Department of State. These directives have served to verify what were formerly estimates, and provided valuable missing links to the political-military structure.

To restrict the scope of this study to strictly military affairs is an impossible task. Since the army is a weapon of the Party and the state, as are all other institutions and functions, its role can be properly understood only when related to the political, economic, social and international activities of Communist China. These latter activities will be discussed only to the extent that they contribute to a better understanding of the military activities with which this paper is concerned.

The accumulation of the facts presented herein would not have been possible without the professional services and patient understanding of the staff of the Command and General Staff College Library under the supervision of Mr. Anthony F. McGraw, nor without the technical direction and sincere enthusiasm and encouragement of the director of the Honors Program of the College, Lieutenant Colonel Bruce C. Koch, and my thesis monitor and faculty adviser, Lieutenant Colonel Archer L. Lerch, Jr. A rare and welcome opportunity to conduct research at the East Asian Research Center of Harvard University provided not only the bulk of the material for this paper, but also a contact with two very able scholars on Communist China who provided sound and time-saving guidelines for the conduct of the basic research. To the staff of the East Asian Research Center and to these scholars, Mr. Ellis Joffe, a student of the military

affairs of Communist China, and Mr. Edward Rhoads, whose bibliographic research was invaluable, I express a special note of gratitude.

During the months of preparation of this paper my wife, through her miraculous efforts in again managing the household singlehandedly while keeping our four and a half children in tow, herself qualified for the degree of Master of Consecutive Hardship Tours. Had she not shouldered the burdens which she did, this paper would not have been possible.

It is my hope that the value of this paper will in some small measure justify the efforts of all the aforementioned persons.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### Growth of the Chinese Communist Army

"Let China sleep, when she wakes the world will be sorry."<sup>1</sup>  
NAPOLEON

China has awakened since these words were spoken by Napoleon well over a century ago and there is little doubt that the world is sorry or at least very troubled. The China that we speak of is mainland China, ruled today by a Communist regime that gained control in 1949. Since that time, Communist China has become a formidable military power in the world arena. The story of this remarkable growth of a small revolutionary force of some 30,000 men into a modern army of some two and a half million had its formal beginning some twenty years prior to the fall of Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalist regime.

On August 1, 1927 a revolt of Nationalist units, commanded by Communist and pro-Communist officers, at Nanchang in Kiangsi Province (Figure 1) marked the birth of the Chinese Communist Army.<sup>2</sup> Although the Chinese Communist Party had been active prior to that date, the Nanchang Uprising marked the first attempt of the Party to seize power in China by the use of armed violence. The years from 1927 to 1936 saw the Chinese Communist forces engaged in a losing battle for survival

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<sup>1</sup>Cited in Edgar O'Ballance, The Red Army of China (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1963), p. 13.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 38.



Figure 1. Communist China Territorial Organization

Extracted from RB 100-1, Reference Book in Strategic Studies, Vol. IV: Readings in the Theory and Practice of Communism (Fort Leavenworth, Kansas: U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, June 1963) p. 325.

against the Nationalist forces of Chiang Kai-shek. A series of Nationalist victories forced a major Communist army of some 90,000-120,000 men to retreat to an area in which it could regroup and rehabilitate prior to continuing its revolutionary activities. This retreat, known as the "Long March" into Shensi Province, began in October 1934, covered a distance of 6,000 miles over rugged terrain and through regions governed by warlords jealously guarding their areas, and terminated a year later at Yen-an, Shensi, where the Communists established their capital. Of the original force, only 20,000 organized troops and some remnants scattered along the route remained to carry on the revolution.<sup>3</sup>

While the Nationalist forces were beginning to conduct a coordinated campaign to exterminate the Communists, a minor clash took place between Japanese and Chinese troops near Peking on July 7, 1937 and sparked an eight year war between these two nations. The Nationalist and Communist leaders joined forces to counter this external menace but the termination of the war in 1945 saw the Communists in the advantageous position. Throughout the war they had conducted indoctrination campaigns and had recruited personnel for the Communist cause. This directly violated the Nationalist's agreement to unite with the Communists against Japan. At the end of World War II the Communist forces began to spread into northern China. Mao Tse-tung, who had gained control of the Communist Party in 1937, refused the demands of Chiang Kai-shek that the Red army be incorporated into the Nationalist Army. Instead, he announced the formation of the People's Liberation Army in July 1946, and Civil War was underway.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>Robert B. Rigg, Red China's Fighting Hordes (Harrisburg, Pa.: The Military Service Publishing Co., 1952), p. 22.

<sup>4</sup>O'Ballance, passim.

After a defensive phase of approximately one year, the People's Liberation Army took the offensive with a force of approximately 1.6 million men. This force consisted of the regular members of the Red army, a portion of the militia it had been organizing, and Nationalist forces that had been captured or had defected as a result of improper treatment at the hands of the Nationalist officers. By November 1948 the Communist forces had increased to three million effectives and were almost of equal strength with the Nationalists. By October 1, 1949, when the Nationalist regime fell and the formation of the People's Republic of China was announced, the Liberation Army was nearly four and a half million strong. It had demonstrated its effectiveness as a guerrilla force; it had overthrown an initially larger force, well trained and equipped and backed by American military aid;<sup>5</sup> it had done this through the use of an infantry army equipped with rifles, few automatic weapons, and a minimum of artillery support, and dependent on the countryside and on captured equipment for its logistical support.<sup>6</sup> But its first taste of full-scale, modern war was yet to come.

In preparation for such a war, outside assistance was required. This assistance towards becoming a modern army was not long in arriving. In February 1950, a defensive pact was signed between Russia and Communist China, and by April 1950 over 3,000 Russian advisers had arrived to help reorganize and modernize the People's Liberation Army. The Army

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<sup>5</sup> O'Ballance, pp. 151, 154, 181. Beginning in September, 1945 the Americans began to transport Nationalist troops by sea and air to assist in stemming the Communist expansion in Manchuria. Chiang Kai-shek asked for a U.S. Military Mission to help reorganize his army in 1946. By 1949 the U.S. attitude towards Chiang Kai-shek had cooled and military aid had tailed off.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., p. 169, et passim.

began to resemble the Russian structure, less its mechanization, as the division increased in size and artillery became an integral part of the organization.<sup>7</sup> In the midst of this reorganization, and now armed with a strange mixture of American, Japanese, and Russian weapons, the Chinese Communist forces found themselves committed in the Korean War.<sup>8</sup> The People's Volunteer Army, as these forces were known, attacked on November 26, 1950, met with initial success, but was "unable and unready to follow their retreating enemy immediately."<sup>9</sup> There were many reasons for this inability to exploit success. These reasons provided the justification for later modernization of the army. Logistically the People's Volunteer Army could not survive off the land in the manner it had grown accustomed to in the Civil War. Russian equipment which had been promised failed to arrive prior to the offensive. Tactically this war was unlike the guerrilla conflict in which the Liberation Army had flourished. For the first time, the Chinese forces learned to fear and respect the tremendous firepower of the United Nations forces. Mass tactics, hitherto sufficient to crush the enemy, were only moderately successful and produced heavy casualties. Despite the arrival of a limited amount of Russian equipment as the war progressed, the Chinese Communists were not prepared to wage modern war. Their activities gradually slackened as they looked forward to an armistice.

The experience gained in the Korean War and the increased material assistance from the Soviet Union led to a general reorganization

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<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 192.

<sup>8</sup>According to a statement from Peking, as reported in the New York Times, November 19, 1963, p. 4, the Chinese Communist forces were pushed to the front at the request of the Soviet Union in order to avert a direct United States-Soviet Union clash in preventing the collapse and loss of North Korea.

<sup>9</sup>O'Ballance, p. 194.

of the Chinese Communist Army. The modernization of the army began with the reorganization in 1954 and has continued up to the present. Today, this army is evaluated as "a massive, moderately well-armed conventional force."<sup>10</sup>

An important factor in the growth of the Chinese Communist Army from a small unit of poorly armed peasants into the revolutionary or Eighth Route Army as it was referred to, and finally to the army of today, has been its orientation on the people. Its identity with the people, and its use of civic-action programs to win the people's support, established a relationship that enabled the army to defeat the warlord armies and the Nationalist troops, and to outmaneuver the Japanese invaders despite an inferiority of numbers and weapons. In the establishment of this relationship the traditional anti-militaristic attitude of the peasants had first to be overcome. The use of the soldier in civic-action type programs was a factor in improving the image of the soldier to the peasants and changing the peasant attitude towards the military profession.<sup>11</sup> Maintenance of the identity of the Chinese Communist Army with the Chinese people is an important factor in the evaluation of its military leadership.

#### Organization of the Chinese Communist Army

The entire military structure of Communist China is known as the People's Liberation Army (PLA) with the army or land force segment referred to as the Chinese Communist Army (CCA). The ground forces

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<sup>10</sup>Ralph L. Powell, Politico-Military Relationships in Communist China, Policy Research Study, External Research Staff, Bureau of Intelligence and Research (U.S. Department of State, October, 1963), p. 11.

<sup>11</sup>John F. Brohm, "Lessons For Civic Action: The Experience of the People's Liberation Army," A paper prepared for A.I.D., September 19, 1962, pp. 1-7.

total about 2.6 million men and roughly 90 percent of the entire PLA strength.<sup>12</sup> Within these ground forces, the predominant force is the infantry which comprises between 102 and 115 infantry divisions compared to two or three armored divisions and one or two airborne divisions.<sup>13</sup> This predominantly infantry force is a necessity forced on the nation as a result of a vast manpower pool and an inadequately developed technological and industrial base.

Control of the armed forces is centralized (Figure 2) and directly commanded by the Ministry of National Defense whose staff performs the general staff functions for the armed forces as a whole, and serves as the ground force and infantry headquarters.<sup>14</sup> The main link, recently revealed, between the Party leadership and the military establishment is the powerful Military Affairs Committee (MAC) whose members are also members of the Central Committee of the Party. This committee is senior to and more important than the Ministry of National Defense and the General Staff. With the exception of Mao Tse-tung its members are military leaders who concurrently occupy the key military positions such as Minister of National Defense, Director of the General Political Department, and Chief of the General Staff. As may be seen, military affairs are concentrated in the hands of a few military specialists who are also leading Party members.<sup>15</sup>

Although there is some question as to the source of military direction of the armed forces, it appears to stem from the Military

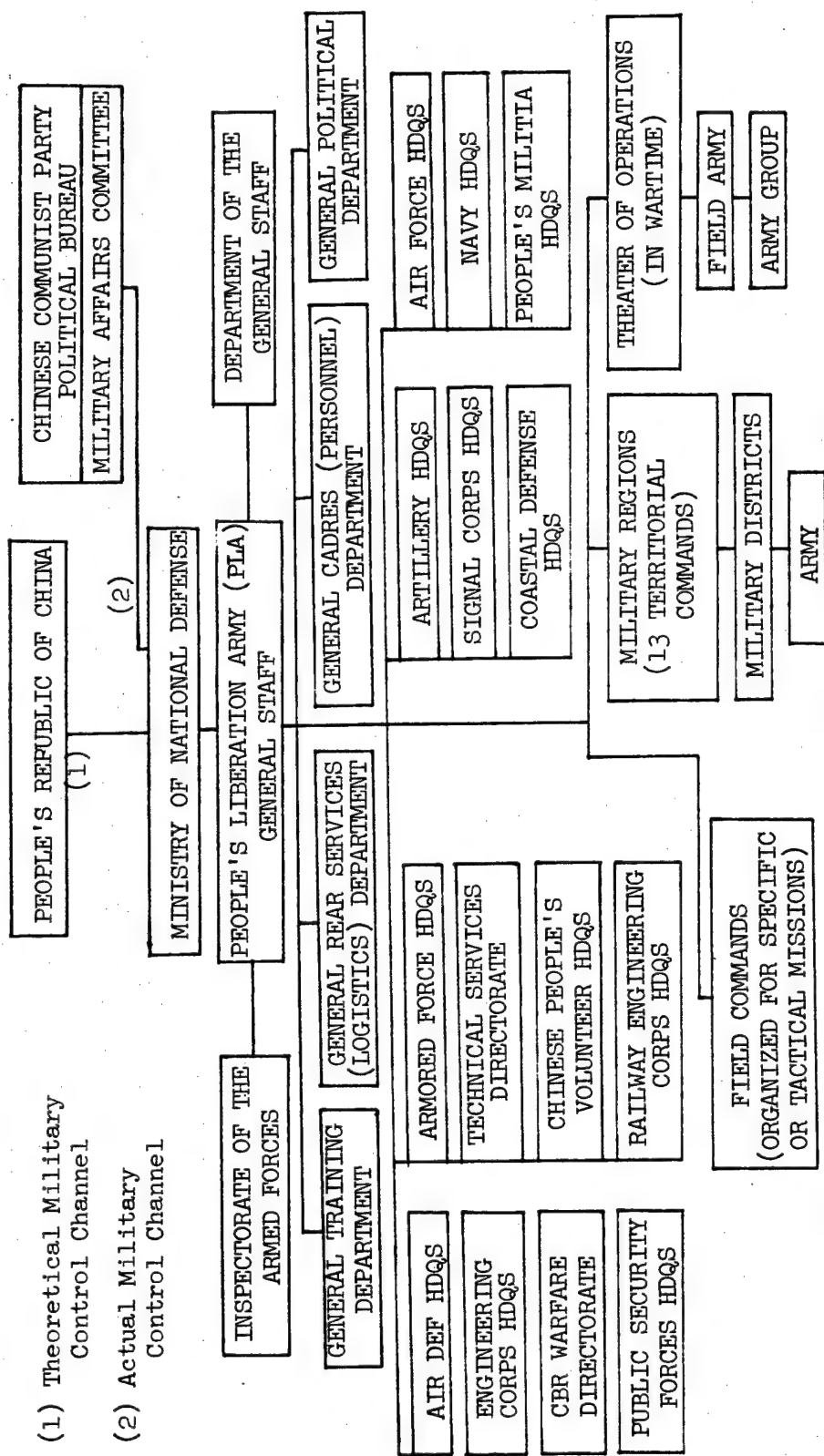
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<sup>12</sup> Department of the Army Pamphlet 30-51, Handbook on the Chinese Communist Army (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1960), p. 1.

<sup>13</sup> Allan S. Nanes, "Communist China's Armed Forces," Current Scene (Hong Kong), I, No. 16 (October, 1961), p. 1.

<sup>14</sup> Handbook on the . . ., p. 1.

<sup>15</sup> Powell, p. 6.



NOTE: Dual command structure within each headquarters below General Department level.

Figure 2. Chinese Communist Military Organization

Adapted from Annex G, DA Pamphlet 20-61, Communist China: Ruthless Enemy or Paper Tiger? (Washington 25, D.C., Headquarters, Department of the Army, 6 March 1962).

Affairs Committee. This Committee functions as the principal military agent of the Politburo and bears responsibility for the organization and combat readiness of the armed forces. It appears to combine most of the functions of our office of Secretary of Defense and the Joint Chiefs of Staff. In addition to the purely military responsibility, the Military Affairs Committee also supervises the political indoctrination and control apparatus within the armed forces.<sup>16</sup> To carry out this dual mission, there is a political organization within the armed forces that parallels the ground tactical organization. (This politico-military relationship will be discussed in detail in a succeeding chapter.) Execution of the policies of the Military Affairs Committee is facilitated by the presence on the Committee of the key executors of the policies, as previously mentioned.

For peacetime operations the ground forces are organized into separate armies--the largest operational units--that are scattered throughout the thirteen military regions (See Figure 1). The operational chain of command extends from the Ministry of National Defense, through the appropriate staff departments of Headquarters, People's Liberation Army, to the commanders of the military regions. There is some doubt as to whether the region actually has operational control of the armies or just bears responsibility for their logistical support. In wartime the separate armies can be grouped into field armies operating in a theater of operations, with the chain of command then running to the theater instead of to the military region.<sup>17</sup> The peacetime organization, although relatively inflexible, is necessitated by the vastness of the China mainland with its more than 11,000 miles of seacoast.

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<sup>16</sup>Nanes, p. 12.

<sup>17</sup>Handbook on the . . ., p. 14.



The ground forces are dispersed in the northeast in preparation for a possible renewed outbreak of the Korean War; in the southwest in support of Communist expansion policies in Asia; in Tsinghai, Tibet, and Sikang for suppression of revolts and for resolution of border conflicts; and throughout the eastern seaboard for defense against Nationalist attempts to invade the mainland.<sup>18</sup> This dispersion together with the existing communication and transportation network in Communist China acts as a serious handicap to mobilization in time of war.

#### The Hierarchy

With few exceptions, the Chinese Communist Army is ruled by men who grew together in the revolutionary atmosphere from the days of the Nanchang Uprising, through the suffering of the "Long March," the war against the Japanese, and finally the Civil War. The names that are found in the history of those campaigns are the same ones found today in the ruling positions in Communist China. Mao Tse-tung, one of the founding members of the Chinese Communist Party in 1929, emerged as a genius of strategy following the "Long March," seized the political reins in April 1937, and has retained his top ranking position to date. Although he has relinquished his governmental position as Chairman of the People's Republic in order to devote his full efforts to his Party leadership, there is little doubt that he effectively controls Communist China.

Fighting with Mao Tse-tung was P'eng Teh-huai, a Nationalist brigade commander who defected to the Communists in 1928. He later commanded the People's Volunteer Army in Korea, and rose to become Minister of National Defense. His relief from this latter position in

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<sup>18</sup> Fei-Ch'ing Yue-pao (Taipei), November 20, 1962, p. 7.

1959 figures prominently in a later discussion of the growing professionalism in the army. Succeeding Marshal P'eng Teh-huai as Minister of National Defense was Marshal Lin Piao, commander of the Fourth Field Army and first commander of Chinese forces in the Korean War. The present Chairman of the People's Republic, Liu Shao-chi, was linked with Mao quite early in the revolution and played a major role in the training of the political cadres that carried out the expansion of communism during and following the war with Japan. He appears to be the likely successor to Mao Tse-tung as Party Chairman.

Probably the key military figure in the successful takeover by the Communists is Marshal Chu Teh who early aligned himself with Mao Tse-tung, and was responsible in large measure for the survival of the Communist forces during the retreat into Shensi Province. Upon the seizure of power on the mainland by the Communists, Marshal Chu Teh became Commander in Chief of the People's Liberation Army. With age greatly restricting any active participation in military affairs, he today occupies a figurehead position as Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress of the government and is also one of the six or seven members of the Standing Committee of the Politburo, the most powerful group in Communist China.

Rounding out the well-known and leading personnel of Communist China is Premier Chou En-lai, an early member of the Communist movement in France in 1921, a career diplomat, and the prime negotiator of the Party. Unlike his compatriots, Chou En-lai did not become actively engaged in the actual fighting during the revolution but did function as liaison between the Communists and the Nationalists. His negotiations during that period qualify him for the role he occupies today.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>19</sup>O'Ballance, passim.

Realization of the following factors lends a better understanding of the problems of military leadership in Communist China. Communist China is ruled by a first generation of leaders whose record of active military service and combat experience, especially in the field of revolutionary warfare and guerrilla tactics, is unparalleled by any other nation. Her leaders are reinforced in their belief of eventual world domination of communism by their success in gaining control of a nation that houses roughly one-fourth of the world's population. These leaders are also intensely devoted to the principles of communism regardless of the temporary hardships it sometimes brings to them and to the people.

#### Military Doctrine and the Role of the Armed Forces

Throughout the brief history of Communist China, the armed forces have occupied a key role. It was through more than twenty years of constant revolutionary warfare by the army that the Party assumed its power, and it is this same army that assures maintenance and extension of the Party's control throughout the nation. This is not to imply that the army occupies the dominant role in Communist China for the words of Mao Tse-tung spoken in 1938 are as applicable today as they were then, and they establish the Party-Army relationship that has always existed:

Members of the Communist Party will not fight for their own personal power over the troops... However, they should fight for the power of the Party over the troops, and the power of the people over the troops... Our principle is to have the Party directing the gun, and never allow the gun to direct the Party.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Mao Tse-tung, "Problems of War and Strategy," in Chinese Communist World Outlook (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, September, 1962), p. 71.

Examination of Chinese Communist publications reveals a variety of missions assigned to the armed forces. In October, 1960 the Military Affairs Committee declared that the mission of the army was "to carry out fully the strategy of active defense, to defeat any invasion attempt, to prepare to liberate Taiwan, and to struggle for the defense of the fatherland and for peace."<sup>21</sup> Aside from these traditionally military roles, the Chinese Communist Army has, and still does function as "a labor force, a media [sic] for mass indoctrination, and a training school first for administration [sic] cadres and now for technicians valuable to the underdeveloped economy. Finally they still serve as a major security force and internal bulwark for the Party. Hence, more than most military establishments, they are a vast gendarmerie."<sup>22</sup>

The military doctrine of Communist China is both defensive and offensive. Its defensive doctrine assumes a major war in which the United States will use both nuclear and biological weapons against the China mainland but will be unable to destroy the regime unless the mainland is occupied by enemy forces.<sup>23</sup> It admits to the destructive effect of nuclear weapons but counters this with a defense based on the ability to trade space for time, a huge manpower pool, dispersion of its military establishments, and the concept of a "People's war" fought by its

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<sup>21</sup> Kung Tso T'ung Hsun, or Work Correspondence (hereafter referred to as K.T.T.H.), No. 3, January 7, 1961, cited in Powell, p. 20. (K.T.T. is a secret periodical issued irregularly by the General Political Department of the People's Liberation Army).

<sup>22</sup> Ralph L. Powell, "The Military Affairs Committee and Party Control of the Military in China," Asian Survey, III, No. 7 (July, 1963), p. 347.

<sup>23</sup> K.T.T.H., No. 10, February 20, 1961, cited in Powell, Politico-Military . . ., p. 19.

regular forces supplemented by its massive militia. With the application of Mao Tse-tung's doctrine of a protracted war this initial strategic defensive would be followed by a period of a stalemate and then a strategic counteroffensive consisting of a combination of guerrilla tactics, mobile warfare and positional warfare.<sup>24</sup>

The defensive doctrine also supposes a situation short of nuclear war, namely an invasion of the mainland by Nationalist forces. This threat of invasion by the forces on Taiwan, supported by the United States, determines to a large extent the troop dispositions of the Chinese Communists. The withdrawal of the Chinese forces from Korea in 1958 and their bolstering of the coastal forces was more a reaction to this threat than it was a prelude to an attempted assault on Taiwan. The threat of invasion is not without basis, for guerrilla activities and uprisings have been a regular occurrence on the mainland. According to Nationalist intelligence reports, the Communists have admitted close to 800 acts of sabotage in Kwangtung alone. The Nationalists themselves admit that commandos have been penetrating the areas of Kwangtung, Fukien and Chekiang provinces and stirring up guerrilla activity since 1962.<sup>25</sup> Although we may discount this threat as infeasible based on our reluctance to give support to the Nationalists for an offensive against the mainland, the Chinese Communists do not.<sup>26</sup> This threat increases the importance of maintaining internal security to preclude the birth of any situation which the Nationalists might exploit.

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<sup>24</sup> Powell, Politico-Military . . ., pp. 19-20.

<sup>25</sup> "Guerrilla Activities in China," Intelligence Digest, No. 301 (December, 1963), p. 12.

<sup>26</sup> K.T.T.H., No. 7, February 1, 1961, cited in Powell, Politico-Military . . ., p. 21.

Both the defensive attitude and the use of the army to maintain internal security are factors that have a significant effect on the attitude of the army.

Communist China's offensive doctrine devotes itself to the support of "wars of liberation." The doctrine claims that the Chinese Communist revolution is the prototype for revolutions in the underdeveloped areas of the world. Recent activities of Premier Chou En-lai in these areas are indications that this doctrine is currently in effect. As justification for supporting these "wars of liberation" the Chinese Communists refer to the American war of independence which relied heavily on foreign support. The Communists claim that, just as no one could doubt the entitlement of the Americans to outside assistance, so too are the present underdeveloped nations entitled to support by Communist China. And just as no one dared to call the French "aggressors" in their rendering of assistance to America in its fight for independence, so too should they not now call Communist China an aggressor.<sup>27</sup>

To assist in the establishment of the Chinese Communist revolution as the prototype of all revolutions, a project was initiated to record the history, regulations and doctrine of the revolutionary army. Officers in the rank of lieutenant general and above, who were also early participants in the revolution, are writing accounts of their military experiences. Units at army level and above are now preparing unit histories. From these experiences, the theories of revolutionary warfare will be derived.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Jen-min Jih-pao (hereafter referred to as JMJP), July 22, 1958.

<sup>28</sup> K.T.T.H., No. 29, August 1, 1961; No. 14, March 29, 1961; No. 26, July 13, 1961, cited in Powell, Politico-Military . . ., p. 18.

Other doctrines that provide useful background to the study of leadership in the Chinese Communist Army are the doctrine of self-reliance and the doctrine which claims that in war the dominant factors are men and politics. Recent publications from Communist China give no reference to actual or anticipated Soviet aid, an indication that the Sino-Soviet rift of recent years has brought a realization that if China fights, she fights alone. In speaking of this possibility, an article published by the Academy of Military Sciences quoted official doctrine as stating that Communist China must dare to fight the enemy "single-handedly."<sup>29</sup> The second factor discussed here, that of the dominance of men over weapons and the superiority of the Communist political system has often been analyzed as justification for a technological inferiority. It will be discussed in a later examination of the modernization and growth of professionalism in the army.

It is not likely that the Chinese Communist's basic doctrine of revolutionary warfare will change in the near future. Unlike other nations, the tactics and strategy of Communist China have not kept pace with its modernization. Despite its technological advances, the army still operates according to the revolutionary doctrine of Mao Tse-tung. The thorough indoctrination of the officer corps in this Maoist doctrine will insure its continuance as the basic doctrine long after Mao Tse-tung vanishes from the scene.<sup>30</sup>

This is not to say that the Maoist doctrine is not suitable for the Chinese Communist Army. So long as it engages in limited wars within Southeast Asia where the use of nuclear weapons thus far appears un-

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<sup>29</sup>Ibid., No. 29, August 1, 1961, cited in Powell, Politico-Military . . ., p. 19.

<sup>30</sup>Powell, Politico-Military . . ., p. 17.

likely, this doctrine is quite applicable. But should China be drawn into a nuclear war its revolutionary doctrine may prove as inadequate as its weaponry.

### The Approach

The first chapter has included a brief account of the history and development of the Chinese Communist Army. In succeeding chapters an attempt will be made to examine the effects and influences on military leadership of the rapid growth of the Chinese Communist Army from a revolutionary band into a major military force. Outwardly, the leadership in the Chinese Communist Army appears to be very effective as judged by the recent successes against India in the border disputes. Considering the status of their equipment and the technologically superior weapons which they faced, Korea might also be considered a success. Whether these successes can be attributed to the military leadership or are the result of the highly disciplined political control system of Communist China can be answered only through examination of the multitudinous environmental factors with which the military leadership exists. To avoid distortion in the analysis of this leadership, both the accomplishments and the failures of the Chinese Communists in developing the leadership must be considered.

Leadership cannot stand by itself; it cannot be isolated from the realities of the past, present or future. This chapter has presented a thumbnail sketch of the roots of this leadership in the environment of a revolutionary struggle, the organization under which it operates, and the policies or doctrines which guide its application. The following chapters will explain the atmosphere of the Party-Army relationship, the many other environmental factors that serve to influence the exercise of military leadership, the soldier, and the leader.



## CHAPTER II

### PARTY - ARMY RELATIONSHIP

#### Policy of Political Supremacy

Unlike our own military system which advocates the avoidance of politics by the military, in the Chinese Communist Army "politics is the soul of the commander."<sup>1</sup> The avoidance of politics by the military is an impossibility because the functions and goals of the army and the Party are synonymous. The Party is well aware that it rose to power because of its armed forces, and that it retains this power only so long as it controls the armed forces. In its indoctrination campaigns it reverses this truth by constantly preaching that the army was victorious because of the Party, and that absolute leadership of the Party over the troops is the greatest assurance of victory in the future.<sup>2</sup>

Shortly after assuming the position of Minister of National Defense in 1959, Marshal Lin Piao re-emphasized the policy of political supremacy and the relationship of the army to politics when he said:

Our army is an army in the service of politics, in the service of socialism, and we must guide the military and day-to-day work with politics. Politics

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<sup>1</sup> Fan Ke, "The Orientation of Political Work for the Army," JMJP July 28, 1961 in Survey of the China Mainland Press (hereafter referred to as SCMP), No. 2556, p. 7.

<sup>2</sup> Lin Piao, "Hold High the Red Banner of the Party's General Line and Chairman Mao Tse-tung's Military Thought and Advance with Big Strides," New China News Agency (hereafter referred to as NCNA), September 29, 1959, in Chinese Communist World Outlook (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, September, 1962), p. 71.

is the most fundamental thing; if political and ideological work is not done well, everything else is out of the question.<sup>3</sup>

This stress on politics goes further than merely having the military man consider the political aspects in all actions that he takes; it emphasizes the subordination of professional military skills to politics since "politics is a guarantee to professional skill" and places political work as "the leading factor among all factors of an army's fighting strength."<sup>4</sup>

The goal of the Party is to have an army which functions as an arm of the Party and is immediately and completely responsive to its demands. To attain this goal the Party requires an elaborate system of indoctrination and control that is superior to the established military chain of command. Such a system has been in effect since the early revolutionary days of the army.

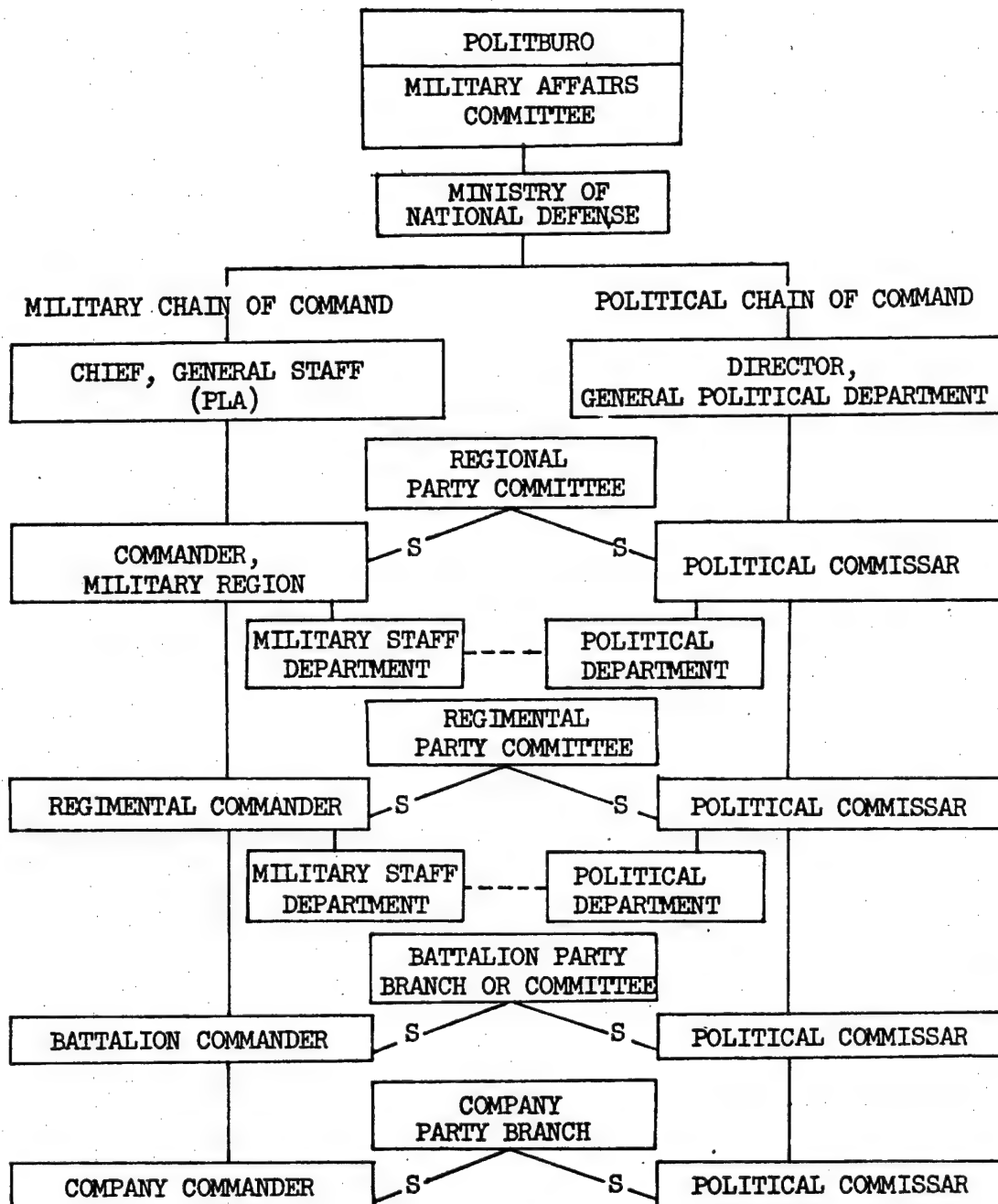
#### The Political Control System

The system of political control provides for a political chain of command that parallels the military chain (Figure 3). The Military Affairs Committee is the operational arm of the Party leadership in all matters and has responsibility for political as well as military work in the armed forces. Its principal agency for the political work is the General Political Department through which the political chain of command functions. At the regimental level and above there is a political

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<sup>3</sup> Lin Piao, "March Ahead Under the Red Flag of the General Line of Mao Tse-tung's Military Thinking," Peking Review, II, No. 40 (October, 1959), p. 15.

<sup>4</sup> Fan Ke, pp. 7-8.



NOTE: Political Commissar is concurrently the unit Party Committee Secretary

--- Coordination  
 ---S--- Supervision

Figure 3. Dual Command Structure, Chinese Communist Army  
 (Derived from varied sources)

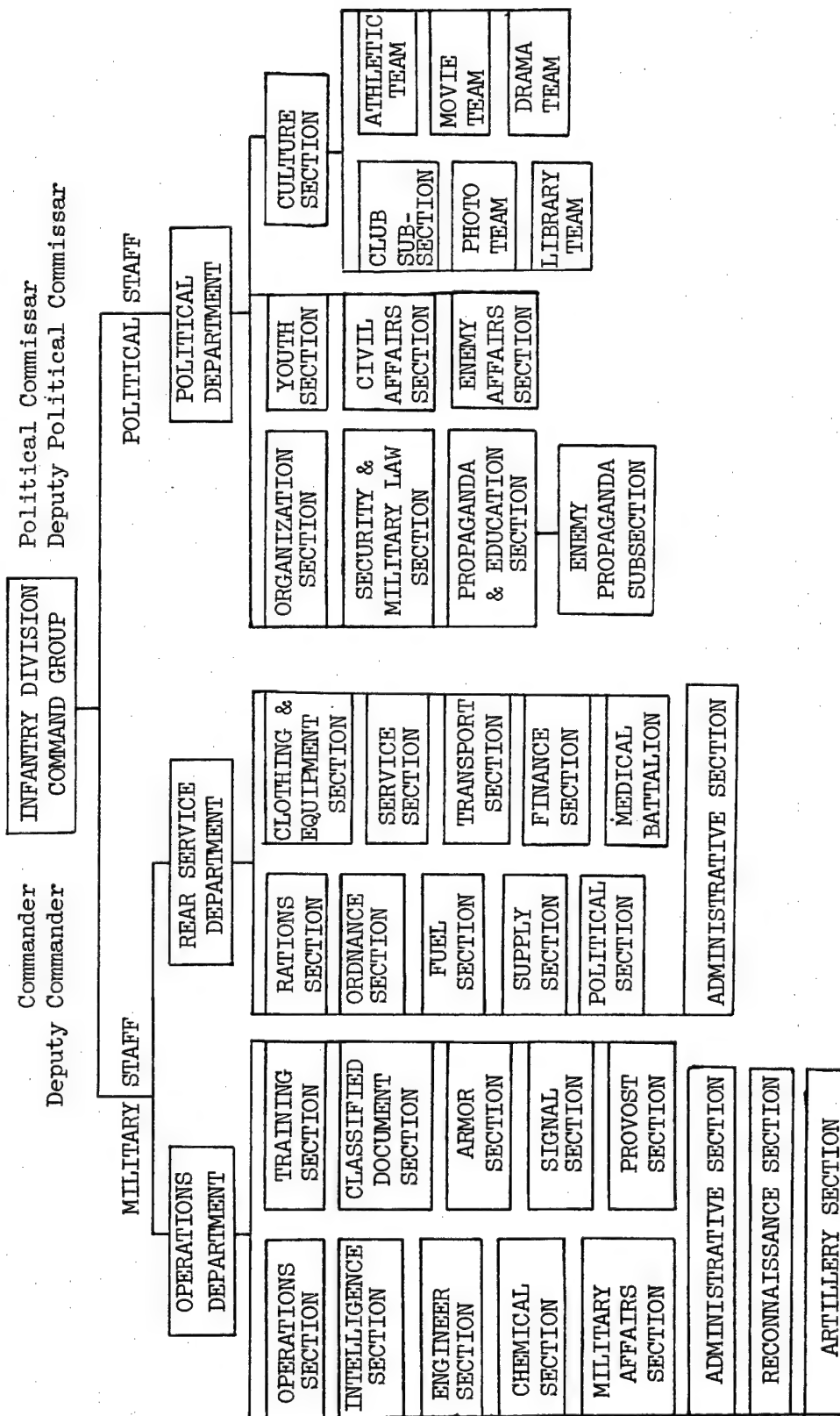


Figure 4. Double Staff Organization, Chinese Communist Infantry Division

Extracted from RB 100-1, Reference Book in Strategic Studies, Vol. IV: Readings in the Theory and Practice of Communism (Fort Leavenworth, Kansas: U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, 1962).

department that administers Party policy (Figure 4). Each unit of company size and above has a political officer, or commissar, who outranks the director of the political department at his level, and who carries out political department functions in those lower units without such departments. He is appointed by the next higher political department and has the mission of insuring the discipline, indoctrination, and political reliability of the unit. In addition he carries on propaganda among the civilian population and, in time of war, against the enemy.<sup>5</sup> Whether or not a political department exists at the battalion level is not known.<sup>6</sup>

The control system is carried even further with each platoon having a political cadre and each squad a political "warrior."<sup>7</sup> Expansion of this system is desired to the extent that each gun, tank, and plane crew will include a Party member. To meet this goal, the Party has directed that draftees be recruited into the Party as soon as they are politically qualified, regardless of time in service.<sup>8</sup> The emphasis in the political control system is control at the company level since this is considered to be the basic unit for political work.<sup>9</sup>

With this dual chain of command there is a division of responsibility so that the military commander is responsible for the implementation of military decisions, while the political commander executes

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<sup>5</sup> Harold C. Hinton, "Political Aspects of Military Power and Politics in Communist China," Total War and Cold War, ed. Harry L. Coles (Ohio State University Press, 1962), pp. 270-271.

<sup>6</sup> Ralph L. Powell, Politico-Military Relationships in Communist China, Policy Research Study, External Research Staff, Bureau of Intelligence and Research (U.S. Department of State, October, 1963), p. 9.

<sup>7</sup> S.M. Chiu, "Political Control in the Chinese Communist Army," Military Review, XLI, No. 8 (August, 1961), p. 27.

<sup>8</sup> Powell, p. 9.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

decisions relating to political work.<sup>10</sup> In theory, these commanders are equals and there would appear to be a potential stalemate should a conflict arise between the two. Such is not the case for exercising control over both commanders is still another control system of "Party committees." A Party committee usually consists of the military commander, his principal staff if they are Party members, the political officer, and other key Party members in the unit.<sup>11</sup>

At the regimental level of command and above, Party committees function under a "collective leadership" policy. The division of labor between the military and political chains of command becomes unified under the leadership of these committees. The counterpart of the Party committee at the company level is called the Party branch. Again, as in the case of the political department, it is not known whether the battalion has a committee or a branch.<sup>12</sup> Through these committees the governmental and military echelons are tied together, for the military Party committees and branches maintain liaison with and accept supervision from the local territorial Party committees.

The committees are the highest authority in planning and policy-making and legally have jurisdiction over the political officers and Party members as well as the military commanders and the troops. Technically, the Party committees have control over only the Party members who may constitute only 20-30 percent of the personnel, but indirectly through the military and political commanders they have a firm grip on

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<sup>10</sup>"Raise Aloft the Red Banner of the Thought of Mao Tse-tung, Resolutely Implement Regulations Governing PLA Political Work," JMJP, May 10, 1963, in SCMP, No. 2984, p. 4.

<sup>11</sup>Hinton, p. 271.

<sup>12</sup>Powell, p. 9.

non-Party members as well.<sup>13</sup>

In effect, both the military and political commanders function as executive agencies for the committees. The interrelationship of the political control system is described in this manner by Marshal P'eng

• Teh-huai:

In our army both military commanders and political commanders are leaders; they are jointly responsible for leadership in the army. However there is a division of work between them: military commanders are responsible for the implementation of orders and directives issued by higher authorities and decisions made by the Party committees of the same level so far as they concern military affairs, while political commanders are responsible for the implementation of those concerning political work.<sup>14</sup>

The Military Affairs Committee has directed that all important problems will be fully discussed at Party committee meetings and decisions taken in accordance with the "principle of democratic centralism of the Party."

This procedure will apply for all except cases of emergency or urgent need, wherein the commander is authorized to take action on his own initiative and later report these actions to the committee. According to Marshal Yeh Chien-ying of the Standing Committee of the Military Affairs Committee, these procedures are also applicable in time of war.<sup>15</sup>

At the company level the authority of the Party branch reaches beyond that of political indoctrination and extends into control over promotions, punishments, training, and operational matters. Despite

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<sup>13</sup> Sin-ming Chiu, "A History of the Chinese Communist Army" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Department of History, University of Southern California, August, 1958), p. 184.

<sup>14</sup> P'eng Teh-huai, Eighth National Congress of the Communist Party of China, Vol. II: Speeches (Peking, 1956), p. 36.

<sup>15</sup> K.T.T.H., No. 3, January 7, 1961; No. 26, July 13, 1961, in Powell, p. 9.

this control, the commanders are encouraged to use initiative and accept responsibility without depending entirely on the Party branch.<sup>16</sup>

### The System in Operation

What may at first glance appear to be an impossible command situation that violates the principle of unity of command seems more workable with the realization that the majority of the commanders at the higher levels are members of the Party. In 1960 it was estimated that 10 percent of the noncommissioned officers, 30 percent of the junior officers, and 90 percent of the officers of field grade and above were members of the Party.<sup>17</sup> As Party members, these commanders are also members of their respective Party branch or committee of which the political officer is usually the secretary. This interrelationship of Party members makes it unlikely that a situation would arise requiring the political officer to countermand a military commander's order. Conflicts between the two commanders are referred to the Party committee where the political officer occupies the most influential position.<sup>18</sup> Despite the Party insistence that this system is compatible with the principles of command, the control apparatus amounts to a Party committee superior to a political officer who in turn is superior to the military commander. With this arrangement it would appear that the degree of control which the military commander may exercise depends on his Party standing, his relationship with his political counterpart,

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Department of the Army Pamphlet 30-51, Handbook on the Chinese Communist Army (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1960), p. 10.

<sup>18</sup> Chiu, "Political Control in the . . .", p. 27.



the personal influence he has with the Party committee, and the nature of his mission--be it in wartime or peacetime.

If the political control system described thus far were completely operational, the Party control would be quite effective, extending throughout the military establishment with concentration at the lower levels. This emphasis on control at the company level is reflected in the role played by the political officer at that level:

. . . as the political officer who is closest to the men he is held responsible for the complete execution of Party policies, the efficiency, welfare, and loyalty of the entire company. The political commissar in the higher echelons merely gives orders and issues directives to a small number of subordinates, but the company political coordinator is in direct contact with the men . . . In view of the many responsibilities of the company political officer, it is clear that he is the key to the success of the whole political system.<sup>19</sup>

Absolute control over the armed forces is not possible when deficiencies exist in the political system at these lower echelons. In April, 1961 the General Political Department charged that the higher echelons of leadership in the army had neglected the organization of the Party branches at the company level. This lack of emphasis resulted in a decline in Party membership, a lack of Party branches in 7,000 companies, most of the platoons without Party cells, and no Party members in a majority of the squads. A reorganization and rectification of the political control system was carried out to correct these shortcomings and by the date of the Department's report the following results were achieved: 279,000 new Party members recruited in the armed forces, Party branches in all companies, Party cells in 80 percent of the platoons, and Party members in half of the squads. This increase in

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<sup>19</sup>Chiu, "A History of the . . . , pp. 190-191.

Party membership and organization greatly strengthened the "leadership role" of the Party branches.<sup>20</sup>

#### Tensions Within the System

Organization alone cannot provide the effective control required in such a centralized system. As the Chinese Communists themselves continually stress, man is the dominant factor.<sup>21</sup> This system of dual command provides a fertile field for tensions; and although the friction is somewhat lessened by the fact that both commanders are normally Party members, conflict does exist. This conflict stems from the increased demands for training, resulting from the modernization of the army, occurring simultaneously with increased demands on the army for greater political work. The modernization and its influence on the growth of professionalism in the army will be discussed in detail in a subsequent chapter. This modernization has led many Chinese Communist military leaders to realize that the present system of control is not one which fosters initiative or allows for the rendering of the quick decisions required in modern warfare. They question the wisdom of placing emphasis on political training at the expense of training in military techniques, and the constant use of the army for non-military duties.<sup>22</sup>

This conflict of opinion has been countered with increased emphasis on political indoctrination. Concurrent with modernization, a program of stepped-up political education in the army is in effect aimed at strengthening the control of the political cadres and emphasizing

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<sup>20</sup> K.T.T.H., No. 23, June 13, 1961, cited in Powell, p. 9.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., No. 9, August 1, 1961, cited in Powell, p. 19.

<sup>22</sup> New York Times, August 13, 1961, p. 32.

their leadership role.<sup>23</sup> Such a program will further subordinate military activities to the political work and tensions may well increase. The Party will not allow the emergence of an officer corps whose interests are above those of the Party and any indications of this trend result in stress on the policy of Party supremacy.

A division of responsibility for military and non-military work following the stabilization of the regime in the early fifties saw the elite members being assigned to the non-military tasks. This placed the Party in the controlling government positions and gave the lower jobs of political commissars to lesser military figures. This arrangement of army men working with strictly army affairs, while the key Party figures concerned themselves with governmental functions, was an important factor in the professionalization of the army and its tendency to drift from the Party's control. With this realization, the Party, as part of its increased program of political emphasis, corrected the weakness in the system by assigning key Party figures to fill the positions of political commissar.<sup>24</sup>

The effectiveness of the "collective leadership" policy has not been tested on any large scale since the modernization of the Chinese Communist Army. As its military leaders become more and more involved in the complexities of waging modern warfare, agitation against this form of leadership may well increase and eventually lead to a decrease in the functions of the Party committee and the political officer, as

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid., March 7, 1963, p. 3.

<sup>24</sup> Donald W. Klein, "The Next Generation of Chinese Communist Leaders," The China Quarterly (London), No. 12 (October-December, 1962), pp. 65, 68.

has been done in the Soviet army.<sup>25</sup> The system in use in the Chinese Communist Army parallels that of the Soviets during their revolution except that under the Chinese system the political officer theoretically does not have overriding authority as did the Soviet political commissar. The Soviet Union has found its political control system to be unsatisfactory in modern warfare and has reduced the position of the political officer to that of a deputy commander. In this position he is obligated to carry out the instructions of his commander, whether he agrees with them or not.<sup>26</sup> Despite the experience of the Soviets, the Chinese Communists have elected to retain their system. Its effectiveness in future conflicts will depend on the degree to which the political commissars are professionally competent not only in Party ideology, but particularly in military doctrine.

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<sup>25</sup> Vyacheslav P. Artemyev et al., Political Controls in the Soviet Army: A Study Based on Reports by Former Soviet Officers, ed. Zbigniew Brzezinski (New York: Research Program on the U.S.S.R., 1954), pp. 3-6. During the Civil War in Russia, commissars were appointed to Red Army units and shared command with the military commanders. All military orders had to be countersigned by the commissars who had the authority to countermand the orders. In 1925, unity of command was established in the areas of combat, supply, and administration, and the functions of the commissars were combined with those of the military commander where the latter was a trusted Party member. In 1937, the commissars were re-established on equal footing with the commanders in both the military and political affairs. The Finnish Campaign brought out the shortcomings of this dual command structure and in 1940 the post of commissar was abolished. The duties were incorporated into the post of Assistant Commander for Political Affairs, but the responsibility for both military and political affairs was placed on the commander. Except for a period of approximately one year--from 16 Jul 41 to 9 Oct 42--when the political commissar was re-established, this system has been in effect.

<sup>26</sup> RB 100-1, Reference Book in Strategic Studies, Vol. IV: Readings in the Theory and Practice of Communism (Fort Leavenworth, Kansas: U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, 1 June 1963), pp. 222-224.

### CHAPTER III

#### THE CHINESE COMMUNIST ARMY LEADERSHIP - ITS CONCEPT AND ITS INDICATORS

##### Establishing the Parameters

The methods of the study of leadership are as many and as varied as the number of leaders that form the basis of such study. The factors that are used to evaluate the leadership in any given army cannot be applied without change to another army whose ideology, standard of living and national traditions are at complete variance. What may be considered proper and successful leadership techniques to the American Army may prove unsuitable when applied to the soldiers of another nation. In examining the leadership of the Chinese Communist Army, its effectiveness cannot be based therefore on its adherence to our leadership principles, but rather must be evaluated by the degree of success which it is able to achieve with the principles it uses.

The problem of limited access to information, as pointed out in the preface, seriously hinders any evaluation of leadership and narrows it to those aspects of leadership on which something is known. If all the qualities or tools for exercising and measuring leadership were to be extracted from all the books written on that subject by leaders and would-be leaders, they would be numberless. The leadership text in use at the United States Army Command and General Staff College reduces this

problem somewhat by summarizing the factors affecting leadership into three basic elements: the situation in which the leader and his unit operate, the unit or group which is led, and the leader.<sup>1</sup> These elements will be discussed in subsequent chapters under the following titles: "The Leadership Environment," "The Chinese Communist Soldier," and "The Leader."

In addition to a study of the elements which affect the leadership, there are available certain indicators which provide an insight into the effectiveness of the leadership. These indicators are generally accepted as being morale, esprit de corps, discipline, and degree of efficiency. A review of the meanings of these terms may contribute to a better understanding of the subsequent discussions. The following notes on these indicators are extracted from the leadership text previously referenced:

Morale. Morale is a mental and emotional state of the individual.

Military Discipline. Military discipline is a state of individual and group training that creates a mental attitude resulting in correct conduct and automatic obedience to military law under all conditions . . . . Discipline is created within a command by leadership, by training, by judicious use of punishments and rewards, and by instilling a sense of confidence and responsibility in each individual. Discipline demands correct performance of duty and is best fostered in an individual by appealing to his sense of reason.

Esprit de corps. Esprit de corps is a mental and emotional state of the unit. Esprit is not a simple summation of the morale of the individuals in the unit but results from the total interaction of the personnel of the unit toward one another and with the circumstances in which the unit is placed.

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<sup>1</sup>RB 22-1, Leadership (Fort Leavenworth, Kansas: U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, 1963), p. 1-3.

Efficiency. Efficiency is the ability to accomplish successfully an assigned task in the shortest possible time, with minimum expenditure of means, and with the least possible confusion. Efficiency is built by sound training and by effective administration.<sup>2</sup>

One point to be noted in these indicators is that they do not stand alone, but are interrelated. For example, morale, esprit, and discipline all contribute to the efficiency of the individual and the unit. Unit esprit is generally a reflection of individual morale.

Fortunately, there is sufficient information available from Communist China to undertake a brief study of these indicators as they apply to the Chinese army. Before applying these indicators a look at the Chinese Communist Party's attitude toward the exercise of military leadership is in order.

#### The Party Attitude Towards Military Leadership

Throughout its brief history, the Party has considered its military leadership as second in importance to the Party leadership. During an interview conducted during the early days of the revolution with Marshal P'eng Teh-huai, the following description of the necessity for good leadership was brought out:

First of all partisan warfare in China can only succeed under the revolutionary leadership of the Communist Party, because only the Communist Party wants to and can satisfy the demands of the peasantry, understands the necessity for deep, broad, constant political and organizational work among the peasantry, and can fulfill the promises of its propaganda.

Secondly, the active field leadership of partisan units must be determined, fearless, and courageous. Without these qualities in the leadership, partisan warfare not only cannot grow, but it must wither and die under the reactionary offensive.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 1-1, 1-2, 1-3.

<sup>3</sup>Edgar Snow, Red Star Over China (London: Victor Gollance Ltd, 1937), pp. 284-285.

In our own evaluation of the importance of leadership to the Chinese Communist Army, made as a result of our contact with it in Korea, it has been written:

To an army like this, utilizing both the most ancient and the most modern equipment and tactics, employing at once primitive peasants actuated by the hope of loot and fear of reprisal and fanatic and arrogant zealots, leadership is the leaven which can mold the whole into an efficient fighting machine or can permit breakup and disaster . . . . The real key to the future effectiveness of the Chinese Army is leadership . . . the inherent fatalistic attitude of the Chinese makes them seemingly fearless in combat as long as their leadership does not falter . . . .<sup>4</sup>

Evidently the Chinese Communists also recognized the importance of strong and inspired leadership in the army for, following the Korean War and during the period of modernization, they took action to develop a regular corps of officers. This development took place within the framework of the Communist ideology which is generally opposed to the principle of individual leadership. The Party's concept of leadership was not in accord with that adopted by most of the western armies, including that of the Soviet Union in whose image the Chinese army was modernized. In the Soviet army the military leadership is based more on the pure leader concept, with the commanders exercising personal authority despite the presence of Party control. In contrast, the Chinese army adheres to the precepts which the Soviet army used during the Bolshevik revolution and which have long since been discarded. Under these precepts the commanders and the political commissars are merely executive organs for the Party decisions. This minor role played by the commanders creates a relationship between them and the men that almost defies application of our leadership principles.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Hanson W. Baldwin, "China as a Military Power," Foreign Affairs, Vol. 30, No. 1 (October, 1951), p. 61.

<sup>5</sup>E.W. Schnitzer, The Development of Chinese Communist Military Forces, trans. from the German (Santa Monica, California: The RAND Corporation, 1958), p. 5.



The Party leaders do not feel that the policy of collective leadership as exercised by the Party committees and branches acts as a hindrance to the commanders. In an editorial published in 1958 in defense of the Party committee system, it was pointed out that the committees were not supposed to usurp the specific tasks that were within the functions and power of the commanders, nor were they to hinder the rendering of emergency decisions by these leaders. In the eyes of the Party, the system of collective leadership, when exercised in war, would strengthen the military command and facilitate the bold judgment of the commanders.<sup>6</sup> An optimistic interpretation of this editorial by this author leads to the belief that the commander could possibly be given a fairly wide latitude for making the quick decisions required of modern war.

The Party does not disregard the use of management as a technique of leadership. In the instructions issued to its senior commanders in Work Correspondence, these five principles of management were quoted:

- (1) Be responsible in management, make demands to prevent the troops from becoming lax and aimless. Be patient in persuasion and education. Be particular about the methods used and refrain from being rough.
- (2) Approach the soldiers by the direct education method and praise good persons and good deeds. Use small group criticism and individual interviews to adjust common mistakes and defects.
- (3) Cadres are to control the soldiers, and the soldiers are to control soldiers among themselves.
- (4) Apply the detailed work of political thinking to the soldiers, look after them enthusiastically, and help them to solve their problems. Cadres should set themselves up as good examples for the soldiers.
- (5) Have a strict discipline, a regularly scheduled pattern of life, and make the soldiers lively and happy.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>"Hold Aloft the Banner of Party Committee System," Chieh-fang Chun-pao (Peking), July 1, 1958, in SCMP No. 1881, p. 5.

<sup>7</sup>K.T.T.H., No. 24, June 18, 1961, p. 7.

These principles summarize quite completely the Party philosophy of leadership, that of placing much responsibility on the commander without giving him the authority to fulfill that responsibility. The management principles all have an element of control that serves to insure complete dominance over the soldiers by using the commanders as the tools of the Party.

As a final note concerning the Party's concept of leadership, although it recognizes the need for effective leadership, it has never allowed this need to conflict with the traditions of the People's Liberation Army. As will be seen in later discussion, whenever the exercise of leadership threatens to break the traditional unity of the officers and men, such as occurred during the modernization of the army, action is taken to reduce the authority of the officers by increased emphasis on the democratic nature of the army. An example is the stress by Marshal Chu Teh in 1958 on leadership through the masses, achieved by serving in the ranks and living with the soldiers as equals, as the best method of leadership to guarantee identity between the officers and men.<sup>8</sup> Actions similar to that expressed in this example have tended to destroy the prestige of the leaders and limit their effectiveness.

#### Discipline Versus Patient Persuasion

The image projected by Communist armies, and particularly the Chinese Communist Army, has always been one of a tightly controlled and strictly disciplined force. It was not the exploitation of a popular uprising that enabled the Communists to defeat the Nationalist forces but the high state of discipline of their revolutionary army. Such discipline

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<sup>8</sup> Chu Teh, "People's Army, People's War," NCNA, July 31, 1958, in Current Background (hereafter referred to as CB), No. 514, p. 3.

was not acquired without a tremendous effort on the part of the Party leaders. In the formation of the army, the early goal was the elimination of all traces of warlordism. These traces were manifested in the practices of misuse of authority, ill treatment of the soldiers, and the application of cruel and often unwarranted punishments. These practices were prevalent in the Nationalist Army and were a cause of the internal dissension that existed.

In recruiting their army, the Communists stressed the principle of democracy whereby all men were ostensibly equals, with the same ration and the same pay.<sup>9</sup> The ordinary soldier began to acquire a degree of respect and responded favorably to the demands of the leaders. During the formative years of the Chinese Communist Army, Mao Tse-tung began to tighten the discipline by instituting a daily program of indoctrination of two hours duration for all soldiers. It was during these periods that orders were discussed prior to their execution. Following the discussion of the orders, implicit obedience to them was demanded. For those who disobeyed in battle, a further explanation and discussion was held for the entire unit, after which the guilty persons were often eliminated.<sup>10</sup> Even this was acceptable to soldiers who had been accustomed to seeing fellow soldiers liquidated for no apparent reason under the Nationalists.

Through this democratic system the discipline of the soldiers became an outstanding characteristic of the People's Liberation Army. This discipline was not limited to the actions of the soldiers within the army but extended to their relations with the people. It was through this discipline of the army that the Party hoped to win the support of the

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<sup>9</sup>Evans Fordyce Carlson, The Chinese Army: Its Organization and Military Efficiency (New York: International Secretariat, Institute of Pacific Relations, 1940), p. 36.

<sup>10</sup>Edgar O'Ballance, The Red Army of China (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1963), p. 57.

people. With this as a goal, Mao Tse-tung early established the basic rules of soldierly conduct as follows:

Rules:

1. All actions are subject to command.
2. Do not steal from the people.
3. Be neither selfish nor unjust.

Remarks:

1. Replace the door when you leave the house/[sic] when it has been used as a bed/[sic].
2. Roll up the bedding on which you have slept.
3. Be courteous.
4. Be honest in your transactions.
5. Return what you borrow.
6. Replace what you break.
7. Do not bathe in the presence of women.
8. Do not without authority search the pocketbooks of those you arrest.<sup>11</sup>

The effect of the stress on discipline was that even Western observers, who were in China during the revolution and were known to be critical of all the Communist activities, marvelled at the discipline displayed by the revolutionary army.<sup>12</sup>

The discipline described here is not the punishment aspect of discipline alone but the unquestioning obedience to the commands of a superior. It was achieved by methods unlike those used in many professional armies. Instead of a denial of social equality and individual initiative, and the use of real or threatened severe punishment, the Chinese Communists based their discipline on the principle of military democracy and the feelings of unity of purpose which that democracy made possible.<sup>13</sup> Whereas the punishments administered to the soldiers under the Nationalists were quite severe and included the administration of

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<sup>11</sup> Mao Tse-tung, On Guerrilla Warfare, trans. Samuel B. Griffith (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1961), p. 92.

<sup>12</sup> John F. Brohm, "Lessons For Civic Action: The Experience of the People's Liberation Army," A paper prepared for A.I.D., September 19, 1962 p. 9.

<sup>13</sup> Brohm, pp. 12, 16.

death without judicial process, the Chinese Communist disciplinary measures were, according to western observers, quite mild. They included criticism of the leaders, self-criticism in an open meeting, confinement to a local prison, and temporary or permanent expulsion from the army, in ascending order of severity.<sup>14</sup>

As the army became more modern, discipline became more important and strict adherence to the democratic nature of the army was no longer possible. The growing professionalism of the officer corps (discussed in a subsequent chapter) and the demands of modern warfare led to a growing tendency towards strict discipline. This discipline in turn brought about a separation of the officers from the men and began to resemble the disciplinary methods of the Nationalists and the Western armies. This tendency was halted through the administration of the rectification campaign of 1959, but it had the effect of showing the Party that tighter measures than those of a democratic nature were necessary.

In shifting from the system of strict discipline which had partially developed, the Party reached a compromise arrangement known as the "patient persuasion" form of discipline. This method, still in force today, called on the cadres to sympathize with and patiently lead those soldiers who made mistakes. Rather than administering a scolding or other harsh treatment, they were to patiently instruct the slow men so they could voluntarily correct their mistakes. This did not imply that suppressive methods were not to be used, but rather that they would be administered "in the way of an elder brother dealing with his younger brother, of a teacher dealing with students." In this manner the leaders would persuade with patience and stimulate the self-consciousness of the

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<sup>14</sup> Carlson, p. 37.

individual so that he would willingly follow his leadership.<sup>15</sup>

In those cases where "patient persuasion" was considered inadequate, severe criticism or punishment could be administered. The principal reliance in the attainment of discipline was to be on the persuasive technique combined with political indoctrination. This point was emphasized by Marshal Lin Piao in 1959:

Where contradictions arise, the democratic method of persuasion and education is used to adjust them according to the unity-criticism-unity formula. In this way unity is strengthened, morale is raised, discipline is consolidated and the initiative and creative energy of the mass of officers and rank and file are developed.<sup>16</sup>

In comparing this technique to the description of discipline given in the first part of this chapter there is no great variance. There is, however, a great stress on the fostering of discipline through an appeal to the soldier's sense of reason. The use of this method of obtaining discipline has not been tested in any modern large scale war. Although the discipline of the Chinese troops against the Indians during the border conflicts in 1962 was outstanding,<sup>17</sup> in the face of the firepower similar to that encountered in Korea, and with an army of conscriptees to control, this "patient persuasion" may prove inadequate in maintaining discipline.

#### Morale and Esprit de Corps

Paralleling the superb discipline that has always been characteristic of the Chinese Communist Army is an extremely high degree of morale. This morale was developed during the formative years of this

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<sup>15</sup>K.T.T.H., No. 24, June 18, 1961, p. 4.

<sup>16</sup>Lin Piao, March Ahead Under the Red Flag of the Party's General Line and Mao Tse-tung's Military Thinking (Peking: Foreign Language Press, 1959), p. 20.

<sup>17</sup>New York Times, August 5, 1963, p. 1.

army through many of the same methods that helped to develop discipline. The first step in this development was the establishment of the prestige of the soldier. By its indoctrinational methods, the Party reinforced the image of the soldier as a peasant and, through its democratic structure in the army, whereby officers and men were equal, avoided the development of any professionalism. It was feared that professionalism might separate the army from the rest of the society. The measures taken to maintain the identity of the army with the people assured the latter's support.<sup>18</sup>

As the support of the people for the army gained momentum and the soldier was no longer considered the lowest form of society, voluntary enlistments increased. This desire to serve automatically brought with it a pride in being a soldier and this pride developed high morale. This system of voluntary enlistment became even more popular through the policies of the Party which called for the villages to care for the land of the volunteer and, in case of death, to share with the government the responsibility of caring for the family of the soldier. Additionally, the volunteers were automatically included in any land redistribution that took place during their absence.<sup>19</sup> The effect of these measures was the raising of the soldier to the level of a privileged class while maintaining his identity as a peasant.

Living better than they had ever lived before, being treated with respect, and fighting for a just cause provided all the incentive necessary for the Chinese soldiers to react as they did in the Korean War. Considering the overwhelming firepower which they faced and the tremendous losses that they suffered, the maintenance of the Chinese Communist soldier's morale was an amazing feat. Had the Chinese Army entered that war with any lower degree of morale than they had, the result may have been

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<sup>18</sup> Brohm, summary, p. 1.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid, pp. 1,2.

a complete defeat. This morale did not develop by itself--it was the result of a strong effort on the part of the military leaders who very early recognized the importance of morale to the success of the Party cause.

Marshal P'eng Teh-huai has been quoted as follows on the subject of the personal qualities essential in the military:

The fulfillment of any military plan depends on the courage self-confidence, fighting power, and esprit de corps of both officers and men. To heighten these qualities is the purpose of political work in our armies. Mere slogans do not help much. The most important thing is a gradual process of education . . . Equally important is the cementing of good relations between officers and men.<sup>20</sup>

The very points mentioned by Marshal P'eng Teh-huai were the methods used to raise morale in the army. The political work stressed the early principles on which the army was founded--those principles of democracy, unity between the officers and the soldiers, and unity of the soldiers with the people. Through its programs of education the literacy of the soldier was raised, and he acquired a social consciousness that added to his importance. These successful measures that made the life of the soldier more desirable instilled a degree of morale in the Chinese army that was the envy of other military powers.

The morale of the soldier in the Korean War, though shaken by the losses suffered, was maintained by the foremost tool of the Party--indoc-trination. It was this technique applied constantly by the political cadres at every level that saw the Chinese army through those dark days. Following Korea, morale returned to its pre-war state and continued that way until 1955 when the introduction of conscription and the growing professionalism of the officer corps threatened to destroy many of the factors which had contributed to the earlier high morale. The soldier was

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<sup>20</sup> Harrison Forman, Report From Red China (New York: Henry Holt Inc., 1945), p. 126.



no longer a volunteer eager to serve, and the traditional unity between officers and men became strained as the officer corps became professionalized and democracy outdated. The morale of the officers rose but it did so at the expense of soldier morale. In an army with its roots in the masses, this was a dangerous situation.

The situation was recognized and remedied with the appointment of Marshal Lin Piao as Minister of Defense in 1959, replacing Marshal P'eng Teh-huai who was held responsible for the unfavorable conditions in the army.<sup>21</sup> That the existence of low morale was one of these conditions is evident from the three objectives which Marshal Lin Piao sought to achieve:

(1) To reassert the Party's absolute domination over the armed forces and preserve its loyalty to Mao and his doctrine.

(2) To increase the professional competence and combat readiness of the armed forces.

(3) To improve the morale and esprit de corps of the army as a necessary prerequisite to the other objectives.<sup>22</sup>

The policy to be followed by Marshal Lin Piao in achieving his objectives was announced soon after the assumption of his post. He reemphasized the basic principles upon which the army had been founded and left no doubt that they were still effective. The growing professionalism of the officers was criticized as being destructive of the unity of officers and men; the continuing validity of collective leadership and the democratic nature of the army were held up as being vital to success; and the glorious traditions of the army were brought to the forefront.<sup>23</sup> This new

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<sup>21</sup>K.T.T.H., No. 24, 18 June 1961; No. 26, 13 July 1961; No. 3, 7 January 1961, cited in Ralph L. Powell, Politico-Military Relationships in Communist China, Policy Research Study, External Research Staff, Bureau of Intelligence and Research (U.S. Department of State, October, 1963), p. 3.

<sup>22</sup>Powell, p. 4.

<sup>23</sup>Lin Piao, passim.

direction for the army effectively restored the morale of the soldier but this time at the expense of the officer class. Increased indoctrination and education which stressed the primacy of the Party, and rectification campaigns to correct the false thinking of the officers were instituted. These campaigns will be discussed more fully in a subsequent chapter but their effect on the morale of the officer will be noted here. The position of the officer was made devoid of respect, and this could only lead to a further decrease in morale for an officer corps which had been developing professionalism

Morale was further affected by the institution of economic reform policies in 1958. The failure of these policies, compounded by a series of natural disasters, brought about a widespread famine. Measures taken to counter the effects of the famine were first felt by the peasants. The disparity in living standards between the peasants and the army, brought about by the imposition of severe economic controls on the peasants, tended to create ill-feeling between the two classes. To retain the army's favorable public image that had been built up over the years, and to further alleviate the economic crisis, drastic measures were imposed on the army. Rations were cut, the families of officers were directed to return to the villages to perform labor, special allowances formerly paid to the children of officers were discontinued, and dependents' food ration tickets were discontinued.<sup>24</sup> Although aware of the effect of these measures on the morale of the army, the Party felt they were necessary to preserve the unity of the soldiers with the people.

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<sup>24</sup>"The Morale of the Army," China News Analysis (Hong Kong), No. 216, February 14, 1958, p. 6.

After stemming the crisis of the famine, one of the first steps was the restoration of privileges to the army. The diet of the soldiers was improved and their dependents received assistance from the villages under a government program which urged the villagers to give extra food to the families of the military. There have been no indications of a permanent decline in morale as a result of the famine and the outstanding performance of the Chinese Communists against India tends to reinforce the opinion that morale has returned to its traditional peak.

Very little material has been published on the esprit de corps of the Chinese Communist Army. In the objectives sought by Marshal Lin Piao, and previously listed, the improvement of esprit de corps is mentioned. Under a system in which the only identity that is stressed is with the masses or the Party it is difficult to envision the existence of esprit de corps within military units. Its existence would be contrary to the basic tenets of the Chinese Communist system and it is assumed therefore that Marshal Lin Piao was referring to the sum total of individual morales rather than esprit de corps as we recognize it.

In the event this assumption is invalid, certain comments on the factors that would adversely effect esprit de corps might be in order. The employment of the army in recent years has been in a relatively peaceful atmosphere. With the general reorganization of the army in 1954, the identity of the units changed so that many units existing today have had little opportunity to prove themselves as combat units. The army has been serving as a labor force and part time militia, roles that are not very conducive to the buildup of pride in a combat unit. There have been certain measures taken to establish goals for the units, mainly of company size, to attain. These have been in the form of the efforts of the units

to be "good" in certain fields as outlined by the Party, such as "good in political thinking," and "good in physical training."<sup>25</sup> The effectiveness of these measures in building esprit is of no great significance. From the record of the army in the past, the morale of the soldiers in conjunction with the detailed system of political control and indoctrination has been sufficient to achieve results that we hope to attain through the development of esprit de corps in our units.

### Training

The last indicator of leadership to be examined is that of efficiency, particularly the training that develops this efficiency. The nature of training within the Chinese Communist Army has changed considerably from what it was during the revolution when training was received in battle with very little formal instruction preceding it. The introduction of conscription in 1955, with its reliance on the citizen-soldier served to return to civilian life many of the experienced soldiers of the Korean War. They were replaced by draftees who required long and intense training to bring them to a level of proficiency required in a modern army. Once trained, they had very little time remaining on active duty prior to being returned to civilian life. This created a need for a continuing training program with the maximum emphasis on actual military training. As will be shown, the needed training time is not available in the quantity desired by the military commanders.

The modernization in the Chinese Army following the Korean War was far in advance of the modernization of the educational system of the country. The introduction of modern weapons demanded that the average

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<sup>25</sup> Chung-kuo Ch'ing-nien-pao (China Youth), 30 November 1961, p. 17.

soldier have a higher level of basic education to qualify him in the handling of these weapons. Although emphasis was placed on those with the most education in the selection of draftees after 1955, the average soldier did not have the background to qualify him for immediate tactical training. For this reason the early months following induction were devoted to the general education of the soldier. This was the initial problem in making maximum use of the active service time of the soldier.

The problem of prime importance and one that resulted from the policy of Party supremacy over the armed forces was the emphasis on political training in the army. As early as 1951, with the beginning of the modernization initiated by the introduction of military equipment from the Soviet Union, Marshal Chu Teh was stressing the importance of political training. In a speech celebrating the twenty-fourth anniversary of the People's Liberation Army he said:

The Chinese People's Liberation Army must build up its various arms, strengthen itself in modern technical equipment, strengthen its combat training and its fighting power so as to undertake the historical task of defending the motherland and opposing imperialist aggression . . . This requires of the whole army that it continue to conduct profound political training of officers and men, and ceaselessly raise the level of political consciousness of the whole army. The high morale and excellent political quality of the People's Liberation Army are always a basic factor in defeating any enemy.<sup>26</sup>

This emphasis on political training was only a part of the many steps essential to modernization and was conducted concurrently with the military training. An article summarizing the modernization of the army up to the summer of 1955 indicated that, in compliance with the directive of Mao Tse-tung and under the leadership and care of the Party and the government, the army had been engaged in methodically improving its arms

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<sup>26</sup>Chu Teh, "Speech at Meeting of 24th Anniversary of Formation of PLA," NCNA, July 31, 1951, in CB, No. 208, p. 5.

and equipment, reforming the various military organizations, and intensifying the military as well as the political training.<sup>27</sup>

The training of the troops, and especially the cadres, was recognized as the "central work in the modernization of the fighting force."<sup>28</sup> It is natural that in a system which regards political supremacy as the key to all success, the major portion of the training would emphasize political indoctrination. This emphasis is reflected in the following training schedule that is followed in basic training:

0530 - 0550	Reveille	
0550 - 0750	Physical Training	
0820 - 0850	Breakfast	
0850 - 1050	<u>Political Training</u>	
1100 - 1200	<u>Political Examination</u>	
1200 - 1400	<u>Discussion on Political Training</u> <u>and Critique of Examination</u>	
1400 - 1530	Rest Period	
1530 - 1600	Supper	
1600 - 1830	Physical Training	
1830 - 1900	Roll Call and Report	
1930 - 2030	<u>Analysis of Day's Work</u>	
2100	Bed Check	29

In hours alone the time devoted to political training, as underlined above, is a major portion of the training day; but what is even more significant is the intensity of the political training. The results that are to be obtained are not superficial nor are they attained by mere attendance at instruction. In addition to knowing the Communist ideology and agreeing with it the soldier must act as if he believes it, must apply it constantly, and must judge his behavior and that of his fellow soldiers

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<sup>27</sup> Huang Yi-mei, "The People's Liberation Army is Marching Toward Modernization," Daily Worker (Peking), July 31, 1955, in SCMP, No. 1163 p. 24.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., p. 25.

<sup>29</sup> Jeane J. Kirkpatrick and Pio D. Uliassi, Adjustment of Chinese Soldiers to the Communist Demand for Ideological Participation: An Exploratory Study Based on the CCF in the Korean War, HumRRO Staff Memorandum (George Washington University, February, 1959), p. 35.

by it.<sup>30</sup> With these requirements the attention of the soldier is occupied by political training far more than the hours indicated.

With the technological advances in the army, and without corresponding increase in the basic educational ability of the soldier, the hours required to train the average soldier have increased. There has been no let-down in the emphasis on political training to allow the additional hours for military training. Compounding this problem is the additional burden placed on the army to function as a labor force. The tasks involved in this latter assignment have led to the description of training as being "like the bombardment of Quemoy - on again, off again."<sup>31</sup> With the failure of the industrialization programs and the decreased flow of military supplies from the Soviet Union, equipment with which to train is in short supply. During 1961 there were many official reports that none of the armed forces were receiving adequate training with modern equipment.<sup>32</sup> With the recent return to emphasis on agriculture, and the almost complete stoppage of military aid by the Soviet Union to Communist China, it is reasonable to assume that whatever training is being conducted is being done with obsolete major items of equipment and with primary reliance on the military equipment which China herself can manufacture.

Since the necessary emphasis on training with modern equipment has not been possible, the training of the cadres was stepped up. In a report on the progress of modernization in 1955 this statement was made:

It would be impossible to build a strong, modernized revolutionary army if there are no cadres (officers) capable in character and in intelligence, possessing knowledge of modern warfare and trained in the techniques of modern military science. Therefore the training of cadres has become the central link in the training of the troops.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>30</sup>Ibid., p. 8.

<sup>31</sup>K.T.T.H., No. 27, July 25, 1961, cited in Powell, p. 11.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid., No. 25, June 28, 1961, cited in Powell, p. 13.

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To carry out this training of the cadres an elaborate school system was established under the General Training Department and included political, combat arms, and various specialization schools (Figure 5). In addition to these schools, systematic training of the cadres was carried out within the units. This training was designed to compensate for the loss of combat veterans that took place following the Korean War. With the absence of battle in which to season the troops the reliance had to be on formal military training. Lo Jui-ch'ing reported in 1961 that most of the squad and platoon leaders were no longer combat veterans, and that within a few years the same would be true of the company, battalion, and even regimental commanders.<sup>34</sup>

As can best be determined, the policy towards military-versus-political training has been altered somewhat to take cognizance of the more complicated weapons and the need for repetitive training. In instructions to the senior commanders in Work Correspondence in 1961, this new guidance was given:

Naturally in discussing military and political relationships, the political is primary and of chief importance. However, with reference to the time allocated for military and political training, then the military must be made the most important and more time allocated for military than political training. Because technology involves training and repeated training, without such training one is lost. The ratio this year provided by MAC for military-political training is the ratio 60:40. In a few cases of special training, 70:30. During training, labor must not be allowed to become excessive and in fact, should be reduced somewhat.<sup>35</sup>

The policy that is stressed in training is that of "few but excellent" whereby a limited number of subjects are studied but excellence in these subjects is achieved. There is little doubt that whatever few hours are

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<sup>34</sup> K.T.T.H., No. 11, March 2, 1961, cited in Powell, p. 11.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., No. 1, January 1, 1961, pp. 4-5.



## GENERAL TRAINING DEPARTMENT

## SCHOOLS

MARX-LENIN POLITICAL ACADEMY, PEKING	
GENERAL STAFF AND WAR COLLEGE, NANKING	
GENERAL MILITARY ACADEMY, HARBIN	
MILITARY RESEARCH INSTITUTE, PEKING	
POLITICAL SCHOOLS	(4 or more)
PUBLIC SECURITY FORCES SCHOOLS	(3 or more)
ADVANCED INFANTRY SCHOOLS	(3 or more)
BASIC INFANTRY SCHOOLS	(11 or more)
ADVANCED ARTILLERY SCHOOL, MUKDEN	
ARTILLERY SCHOOLS	(5 or more)
ARMORED FORCES SCHOOLS	(2 or more)
NAVAL ACADEMY	
NAVAL TRAINING SCHOOLS	(6 or more)
ENGINEERING SCHOOLS	(4 or more)
AIR DEFENSE SCHOOLS	(4 or more)
MILITARY MEDICAL COLLEGE, PEKING	
MILITARY MEDICAL SCHOOLS	(8 or more)
ADMINISTRATION SCHOOL, PEKING	
LOGISTICS SCHOOL, PEKING	
FINANCE SCHOOLS	(2 or more)
CHEMICAL WARFARE SCHOOLS	(3 or more)
SIGNAL SCHOOLS	(4 or more)
ORDNANCE SCHOOLS	(5 or more)
PHYSICAL TRAINING SCHOOL, CANTON	
OTHER SPECIAL PURPOSE SCHOOLS	

Figure 5. Armed forces schools under the General Training Department.

Extracted from Appendix G, Department of the Army Pamphlet No. 20-61, Communist China: Ruthless Enemy or Paper Tiger? (Washington 25, D.C., Headquarters, Department of the Army, 6 March 1962).

devoted to military training are utilized to the maximum for the Communist system of indoctrination emphasizes little or no waste. With criticism as one of its control methods, weak areas are quickly identified and corrected. With the shift from industrialization to agriculture in 1961, and the shortage of equipment that this shift caused, the Party attacked the poor maintenance, storage, waste and loss of equipment that had been taking place within the army and directed the attention of the commanders to correction of these faults.<sup>36</sup>

This same ability to analyze its own weaknesses enabled the Communists to learn ours in Korea. Through an exploitation of our weaknesses the fighting effectiveness of the Chinese Communist forces was improved. Captured documents have revealed that the Communists recorded certain practices of the United Nations' forces and based their own tactics upon them. For example, they listed the enemy's practice of attacking at first light, his lack of familiarity with night operations, weaknesses in physical endurance, the infantry's reliance on supporting weapons, and the reduced efficiency of tanks, artillery, and aircraft at night.<sup>37</sup>

In summary, although there is a large percentage of training time allocated to political training, this time is essential in a system which depends primarily on political indoctrination for its effectiveness. The shortage of time for military training is not unlike the situation that exists in our own army. The tight discipline enforced in the Chinese Communist Army insures maximum use of time and available equipment. With only the record of the competent performance of the Chinese Communists on

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<sup>36</sup> Ibid., No. 27, July 25, 1961; No. 30, August 26, 1961, cited in Powell, p. 13.

<sup>37</sup> R.C.W. Thomas, "The Chinese Communist Forces in Korea," Military Review, XXXII, No. 11 (February, 1953), p. 91. Digested from an article in The Army Quarterly (Great Britain, October, 1952).

the Indian frontier as a basis for the judgment of the effectiveness of their training, it must be assumed that the efficiency of the Chinese army in the conduct of limited war is at least satisfactory. With the experience it acquired through the skirmishes with India, any deficiencies that were uncovered will undoubtedly be corrected and combat efficiency improved.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE LEADERSHIP ENVIRONMENT

#### Domestic and International Tensions

Since the Chinese Communist Army is the primary instrument of control for the Party, there is hardly a function that takes place within China, or without, that does not directly affect its operations. The army has figured prominently in the many efforts of Chairman Mao Tse-tung to elevate China to a position of world prominence. These efforts have invariably resulted in some form of set-back in the development of the armed forces and caused dissatisfaction among the military leaders.

During 1958, Mao Tse-tung introduced two new programs that were to have a devastating effect on the economy and morale of the Chinese people. In the desire to obtain independence from the Soviet Union in the industrial field, an unplanned leap in production was ordered by the Party for the entire nation in industry, agriculture, science, and education.<sup>1</sup> This first program was known as the "Great Leap Forward" through which Communist China was to leap to the forefront and become an independent power. There is much speculation over the reason for the institution of this program in the face of agricultural set-backs that Communist China was experiencing at the time. It is significant, however, that the inception of the program followed a visit by Mao Tse-tung to Moscow during

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<sup>1</sup>Valentin Chu, Ta Ta, Tan Tan (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, Inc., 1963), p. 38.

which the Sino-Soviet rift reportedly began.<sup>2</sup> The drain caused on the nation by the "Great Leap Forward" was to be felt in the years to follow. The nation was mobilized for industrialization at the expense of its agricultural pursuits. Without going into detail on the economic thought behind the program and its effects on each segment of society, suffice it to say that the modernization of the army suffered greatly.

The "leap" diverted hundreds of thousands of peasants from the fields to the factories, leaving much of the arable land untilled. Coupled with a series of natural disasters, this diversion resulted in a nationwide famine during 1959 and 1960. This famine brought the morale of the troops to a low point because of the reduction in rations which they suffered and because of reports they received concerning stress and unrest in their native villages.<sup>3</sup> At the same time, Mao Tse-tung's decision to go-it-alone caused a further cut in the assistance from the Soviet Union. With no materials arriving from outside the country, and with the lack of success of the industrialization program, a drastic shortage of spare parts and other military supplies developed. To an officer corps seized by professionalism, a Party policy which severed the only source of supply of modern weapons was a difficult one to support. Marshal P'eng Teh-huai reportedly spoke out against the Party policy and was summarily relieved.<sup>4</sup>

Compounding the effect on morale and the equipment shortage that the "leap" had caused was another sore point of contention between the Party and the officer corps. In an effort to salvage the program, all

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<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 283.

<sup>3</sup>New York Times, August 5, 1963, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup>David A. Charles, "The Dismissal of Marshal P'eng Teh-huai," The China Quarterly (London), No. 8 (October-December, 1961), p. 65.

available manpower was needed, and the army had that manpower. One of the primary tasks of the army became civic action--that of assisting technical work and supporting the agricultural production in the provinces. Since the army was considered an army of the people, the Party considered the use of the army on these non-military tasks quite proper and, in fact, freely publicized the fact. Statistics for 1959 showed a total of 59 million workdays contributed by the army to civic tasks.<sup>5</sup> This amounted to approximately twenty-four days per man. In the eyes of some military men, this constituted an extra burden on the army, interfered with training, and was a source of lowered morale.<sup>6</sup>

Despite the resentment created by the "Great Leap Forward" the overall loyalty of the army was maintained. It did, however, create a further rift between the military and political leaders in that the policies of the Party were having an undermining effect on the development of the army. The Party's answer to any developing rift has traditionally been a tightening of the political controls and increased emphasis on the Party supremacy in the armed forces. In the discussion on the rectification campaigns this pattern will be further explained.

The second of the two programs introduced by Mao Tse-tung in 1958 was that of the system of communes. A study of this system is an enormous task in itself and its mention here is only to add its effects on the growing internal tensions that affected the Party-Army relationships. The commune system was an attempt to destroy the traditional

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<sup>5</sup>U.S., Congress, Senate, Committee on the Judiciary, The Effect of Red China Communes on the United States, Testimony of Edward Hunter, March 24, 1959 (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1959), p. 54.

<sup>6</sup>Allan S. Nanes, "Communist China's Armed Forces," Current Scene (Hong Kong), I, 16 (October, 1961), p. 5.

Chinese family life by shifting the stress from the family as the center of social life to the Party as this center. These communes were to be self-supporting, self-sustaining, agricultural-industrial-military units of from 10,000 to 40,000 people each.<sup>7</sup> All aspects of life were communized--children were separated from their mothers and raised in a nursery while the mothers worked; wives and husbands were separated and allowed to visit only at specified times; all were fed in a community mess hall. In short, this was to be a utopian form of living. The people wanted no form of utopia, however, and immediate resistance arose. The initiation of this program along with the "Great Leap Forward" and the subsequent agricultural failures led to a retreat from the commune program began not long after it was instituted.

Here again, as with the "leap," the effects were felt in the army. Reports of growing discontent in the villages preyed on the minds of the soldiers who traditionally had considered the family as the center of life. Morale sank even lower and the Party began to come under severe criticism. As a point in favor of the Party it must be stated that its early recognition of the problems of communization and its retreat from the commune system allowed the Party to maintain its position of supremacy.

The communes did continue in effect but with less severity than when first instituted. They were officially amended at the end of 1960 to make them less regimented and somewhat more palatable to the people. The amendment of the commune system was followed in January 1961 by a communique which signalled the end of the "Great Leap Forward." This communique acknowledged the failure of the program due to the natural

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<sup>7</sup> Chu, p 185.

disasters that had befallen the mainland, and directed the emphasis back to agriculture for the time being. The communique further admitted that there had been some disaffection as a result of the program but that over 90 percent of the people had remained loyal.<sup>8</sup>

Although it survived the internal conflict, Communist China did not fare as well with the Soviet Union. In backing off from its dreams of becoming technically self-sufficient, Communist China was left without any source of major items of military equipment. As the tensions with the Soviet Union increased, the result was an end to the visions of becoming a military power on a par with the United States and the Soviet Union. The obsolescence of the major equipment on hand has lessened the threat of China as an offensive power and caused her to think defensively and in terms of support of insurgency-type operations. This change of direction was a blow to the professional officers and a challenge to their loyalty and their will to wage war for the Party.

The sum total of these conflicts was a decline in the combat readiness of the armed forces in 1959. According to official reports of the People's Liberation Army, the army "had deteriorated from what must be admitted were the politically motivated, physically tough, battle-hardened veterans of the pre-1949 period" and was "suffering from defects characteristic of conscript armies which have long been at peace on garrison duty."<sup>9</sup> Despite these defects the army has remained a fairly capable and moderately well-armed conventional force.

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<sup>8</sup> Far Eastern Economic Review, 1962 Handbook (Hong Kong), p. 54.

<sup>9</sup> Ralph L. Powell, Politico-Military Relationships in Communist China, Policy Research Study, Bureau of Intelligence and Research (U. S. Department of State, October, 1963), p. 11.



Any speculation on the effects that the foregoing problems may have produced within the army may be guided somewhat by an analysis that was made of captured Chinese Communist Army documents covering the period just described. Those specialists conducting the analysis were impressed by the Party's awareness of the problems and the steps taken to overcome them. There was no indication of a loss of control over the troops; on the contrary, the highly disciplined performance and the fact of no desertions of the Chinese Communist forces against India in 1962 indicates that Party control is still effective.<sup>10</sup>

#### The Rectification Campaigns

One of the means by which effective control of the army has been and is maintained is through the medium of the rectification campaign. During such a campaign, each member examines his thinking and behavior, criticizes others, accepts criticism of himself, acknowledges his errors and pledges to reform. To remain silent is to be accused of non-cooperation and to be the object of suspicion of having an improper attitude or of covering up questionable acts. Through the rectification campaigns the Party leaders have an opportunity to detect deviations, disloyalty, or misconduct among the rank-and-file members and to dispense with the undesirable elements.<sup>11</sup>

A rectification campaign usually results from a special situation that has arisen or from a change in Party policy. For example, in 1957 Mao Tse-tung was seriously convinced that he had the willing support of the people for the Party and its policies. So firm was this belief that

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<sup>10</sup> New York Times, ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Franklin W. Houn, To Change a Nation (New York: The Free Press of Glencoe, a division of the Crowell-Collier Publishing Co., 1961), p. 4.

he instituted what is known as the "Hundred Flowers" campaign. In a speech which he delivered to the Supreme State Conference in Peking on February 27, 1957, Mao Tse-tung told of his desires to "Let a Hundred Flowers Blossom, Let a Hundred Schools of Thought Contend." Through this phrase the people were to know that they could speak and think freely without any fear of reprisals. The people had, as it turned out, a justifiable reluctance to partake of this newly granted freedom. At the urging of the Party the ice began to break and the people became convinced of the sincerity of Mao Tse-tung. The Party was not prepared, however, for what was to follow for criticism began to mount against the living conditions, the Party policies, the bureaucracy, and against Mao Tse-tung himself. The criticism mounted gradually as more and more persons jumped on the bandwagon. Their feelings could be summed up in the words of one who wrote that ten of the twelve million Party members should be executed. With reaction such as this, the "Hundred Flowers" campaign was terminated just six weeks after it had begun.<sup>12</sup>

This experiment was followed by a rectification campaign that exposed and silenced those who had spoken out against the Party. This campaign arrested what may well have amounted to outright denunciation of communism, strikes, demonstrations, uprisings, and resultant civil strife that would likely have destroyed the entire communist regime.<sup>13</sup>

The use of the rectification campaign against the army has occurred in several instances and has been a prelude to increasing the

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<sup>12</sup>"The Chinese Thaw," Chinese Communism, Selected Documents, ed. Dan N. Jacobs and Hans H. Baerwald (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers Inc., 1963), p. 79.

<sup>13</sup>Edward Hunter, The Black Book on Red China (New York: The Bookmailer, Inc., 1958), p. 25.

political awareness in the armed forces. In 1957, the charge was levelled at the military leaders that they had succumbed to the temptations of "commandism" and "dogmatism" in their dealings with the soldiers. To remedy this situation a rectification campaign was initiated in the army to obtain admission to these charges and served as grounds for revamping the curriculum of the service schools. Of the total curriculum, 20 percent was now to be devoted to purely political studies, while another 30 percent was for technical studies with emphasis on the study of the works of Mao Tse-tung. Again, in 1958 when the traditional unity of officers and men came under attack, another rectification campaign was introduced and was followed by the "officers to the ranks" movement.<sup>14</sup>

In explaining the need for the rectification campaign in 1957, Teng Hsiao-ping, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Party, said:

In the course of the great social changes over the recent years, the political and ideological conditions of the officers have been generally sound. But in the past few years there has been among the officers some development of individualism and a tendency to ignore the organizational principle and discipline, as a result of the operation of such factors as the existing peaceful environment, large numbers of new recruits, and the lopsided emphasis of certain officers on specialization at the expense of political and ideological work . . . There are also some defects to be rectified in the relations between officers and men, between higher and lower ranks, and between the army and the people. Military units have not maintained adequate close ties with the local Party and government organizations, and have not arranged for the regular study and publicity, among officers and men, of the policies of socialist transformation and socialist construction. Some incorrect views still exist among a small section of officers and men over many questions regarding present rural work.

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<sup>14</sup> S.M. Chiu, "Chinese Communist Military Leadership," Military Review, XXXIX, 12 (March, 1960), p. 66.

All these questions must be resolved earnestly through the current rectification campaign and socialist education . . . The purpose of the rectification campaign must be nothing other than to enhance socialist consciousness, further close the ranks of the armed forces, and strengthen discipline and fighting power.<sup>15</sup>

This explanation clearly summarizes the goals of all the rectification campaigns aimed at the army, at least as they are publicly announced. Through their use the Party insures the maintenance of control and the ready response of the army to the Party's demands.

The Party sees no adverse effects in the army as a result of these campaigns and feels that the army only benefits from them. In their words:

The several rectification campaigns have proved that whenever the error of an exclusive military viewpoint is committed, the army becomes stupefied and when the exclusive military viewpoint is overthrown, Party leadership strengthened, and the mass line working style developed, the dull atmosphere in the army is swept away and the army becomes invigorated and full of militant spirit from top to bottom.<sup>16</sup>

#### Indoctrination

The rectification campaigns are but one of the elements of an overall indoctrination program by which the Party remains in the prominent position which it occupies. Indoctrination is the key to the achievement of the Communist goals and provides the incentive that is needed to achieve results. Marshal Chu Teh stressed this fact as early as 1945 when he stated, ". . . the first thing in training an army is to train the mind of the soldier. There will be no spirit of initiative in an army whose political understanding is low, which does not know what

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<sup>15</sup>Teng Hsiao-ping, Report on the Rectification Campaign (Peking: Foreign Language Press, 1957), p. 44.

<sup>16</sup>Chu Teh, "People's Army, People's War," NCNA, July 31, 1958, in CB, No. 514, p. 3.

it is fighting for . . ."<sup>17</sup>

The primary method of employment of the weapon of indoctrination is through the educational systems. During the revolution, it was through education that the Liberation Army won over the people in those areas which it had taken from its opponents.<sup>18</sup> It carried the social message of the Party to the people and was identified as the indoctrinating tool of the Party.

Korea provides an excellent example of the effectiveness of the Communist indoctrination against both the Chinese people and our own forces. Through an intense indoctrination program, the Communists maintained the Chinese soldier's will to fight to the point that General Clark was able to testify as to their unquestioning compliance with orders.<sup>19</sup> The types of indoctrination used were many and varied but may be categorized as follows:

(1) Ideological - designed to instill beliefs in the goals of the Communists in Korea.

(2) Information - publication of the news of the war's progress.

(3) Threats - to punish men who deserted their posts; of retaliation against families of those who desert or surrender; of harsh and cruel treatment of Chinese Communist soldiers who became prisoners of the United Nations' forces.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Chu Teh, The Battle Front of the Liberated Areas (Peking, 1955) p. 53.

<sup>18</sup> John F. Brohm, "Lessons For Civic Action: The Experience of the People's Liberation Army," A paper prepared for A.I.D., September 19, 1961, p. 20.

<sup>19</sup> Mark W. Clark, From the Danube to the Yalu (New York: Harper, 1954), p. 88.

<sup>20</sup> Lessing A. Kahn and Florence K. Nierman, A Study of Chinese and North Korean Surrenders (Operations Research Office, The Johns Hopkins University, ORO-T-31, September, 1952), p. 81.

Concurrently with these forms of indoctrination, the Communists used a technique through which they saved their highly indoctrinated personnel from loss in combat. They pulled these personnel out of their positions at all levels of command prior to entry into combat and promoted the subordinates who were then inspired to prove themselves. This instilled a patriotic fighting spirit in the leadership of the troops and still saved the highly indoctrinated leaders for further indoctrination of other soldiers.<sup>21</sup>

Not only does the ferocity with which the Chinese Communist soldier fought attest to the effectiveness of this indoctrination, but also a look at the record of our own captured personnel in Korea. In employing their indoctrination techniques against our captured personnel they demonstrated their expertise through the effective results attained without any special intelligence, against an enemy of whom they knew very little, and through the use of simple techniques. As brought out in the hearings before the Committee on Un-American Activities, this indoctrination achieved the following results:

- (1) Roughly 1 of every 3 American prisoners collaborated with the Communists in some way, either as informers or as propagandists.
- (2) Discipline among Americans was almost nonexistent. It was a case of dog eat dog for food, cigarettes, blankets, clothes.
- (3) For the first time in history Americans - 21 of them - swallowed the enemy's propaganda line and declined to return to their own people.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>21</sup>Wang Tsun-ming, Anti-Communist: An Autobiographical Account of Chinese Communist Thought Reform (HumRRO Staff Memorandum, The George Washington University, November, 1954), p. 61.

<sup>22</sup>U.S., Congress, House, Committee on Un-American Activities, Communist Psychological Warfare (Brainwashing), Consultation with Edward Hunter (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1958), p. 15. Mr. Hunter, an American expert on Communist brainwashing, gave these statistics to the Committee during consultation in March, 1958. He was quoting from newspaper dispatch from the New York Times on January 6, 1957 on the subject of the Code of Honor proclaimed by President Eisenhower on August 17, 1954. The figures reportedly were taken from official accounts.

There were many factors that contributed to these statistics which are a blot on our military record, but the contribution made by the Communist propaganda techniques can in no way be discounted. If they were able to achieve such results against a fairly unknown enemy, the potential for employment against their own people, whom they know so well and whose entire existence they control, must be limitless and must be a governing factor in examining the environment in which the military leadership finds itself.

The emphasis which the Party places on indoctrination as a tool for the control of the armed forces was reflected in the choice of a new Chief of the General Staff in 1959 during the time that Marshal P'eng Teh-huai and General Huang Ke-cheng were relieved. The Party selected General Lo Jui Ching, a professional indoctrination and political officer. His primary professional experience between 1930 and 1949 was as political commissar at various levels of command. Immediately prior to his appointment as Chief of the General Staff he held the post of Minister of Public Security and Commander and Political Commissar of all Public Security Forces.<sup>23</sup> For the implementation of a program to politically re-indoctrinate the officer corps and eliminate disaffection, the Party could hardly have selected a more appropriate officer.

A large portion of the indoctrination is carried on through the education programs. Through the years the cadres within the army have been encouraged to study the works of Mao Tse-tung. This study, referred to as "theoretical study" in the Chinese periodicals, was directed by the General Political Department. Regulations published by that department required that the larger units set up evening schools for this study,

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<sup>23</sup>Powell, p. 4.

and that all officers attend. Those officers who were not able to attend the classes, to include those temporarily absent from their posts, were to study the political theory on their own for one half day during the week and in their spare time.<sup>24</sup>

Especially in the service schools this stress on political indoctrination is felt. During the Party's campaign against the dogmatism of the officer corps, the curriculums of the service schools were revised to emphasize political training. In the case of the Military Academy, the political course was increased from 16 to 20 percent of the curriculum and the self-study and discussion periods, which were politically oriented, were increased from one-third to one-half of the allotted time.<sup>25</sup>

Whenever the people or the troops appear to be straying from the Party line the indoctrination campaigns are stepped up in tempo. These campaigns have followed each other in rapid succession, indicating that there are always areas in need of improvement. The army has been a prime target of these campaigns, as in the case of the "officers to the ranks" movement designed to curb the professionalism of the officer corps. To motivate the ordinary comrades, and especially the peasant soldiers, the Lei Feng campaign was introduced. This was a campaign to build an "ordinary hero" at a time when the Party felt that the ordinary man needed some encouragement, and the popularity of Mao Tse-tung required a boost. In 1962, after the failure of the "Great Leap Forward," the Party began to publicize a common soldier, Lei Feng, who had been killed in a motor

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<sup>24</sup>"Entire PLA Officer Corps Takes Up Theoretical Study," NCNA, February 21, 1956, in SCMP, No. 1241, p. 5.

<sup>25</sup>"Military Academy Continues to Intensify Opposition to Dogmatism," Chieh-fang Chun-pao (Liberation Army News), June 24, 1958, in SCMP, No. 1817, p. 16.



vehicle accident. His life as a common citizen and later as a soldier was praised and held up as the embodiment of every Communist virtue. He was described as a model of unselfishness and thrift, and intensely devoted to Chairman Mao Tse-tung. Throughout the campaign, the stress was on the phrase "ordinary but great" with the implication that, although everyone in China was an ordinary person performing an ordinary task, greatness could still be attained--a greatness in the image of the heroism displayed by the old soldiers in the Long March.<sup>26</sup>

This campaign relates two important facts; one is the typical manner in which the indoctrination system continues to operate; the second, and more important, is the indication of the attitude of the young soldiers which brought about the need for the Lei Feng campaign. The continuing requirement for greater political enthusiasm and more production in the face of very little material increase may well indicate serious disaffection that may lead in one or two directions. One is the growing of the army away from political control; the second and more likely direction is an even greater enforcement of political controls over the army, with almost complete emphasis on the power of the political officer, even in the strictly military affairs.

One weakness of the present indoctrination system that must be pointed out is its lack of durability. The Communist hierarchy realizes from the record in Korea that its program is only skin deep in the majority of cases and is effective only so long as the people are isolated from outside influence.<sup>27</sup> An interesting corollary to the ferocity with

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Far Eastern Economic Review, 1964 Yearbook (Hong Kong), p. 125.

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U.S., Congress, House, Committee on . . . , p. 19.

which the Chinese Communist soldier fought in Korea is the record of repatriation following the war. Whereas the average soldier who surrendered in Korea did so only as a last resort, when it came to repatriation, after a prolonged absence from the influence of Communist indoctrination, more than two-thirds or approximately 14,300 of the Chinese prisoners refused repatriation to Communist control.<sup>28</sup> Of this number, 4,765 were Communist Party or Youth League members.<sup>29</sup>

To maintain control, the Party not only isolates the people from outside influences, but also isolates the soldiers from the people and from the influences of the countryside. During the period of the famine, when news of the suffering at home was reaching the ears of the soldiers and adversely affecting their morale, a restriction was placed on letters and periodicals normally accessible to the soldiers. In the case of higher ranking personnel, they are not permitted to travel abroad except when their return is assured, such as through the hostage of the family.<sup>30</sup> It may be deduced from the record in Korea, the regularity of the indoctrination campaigns, and the means for isolation of the soldiers from outside influences that the Communist indoctrination program does not result so much in true belief as it does in submission.

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<sup>28</sup> Samuel M. Meyers and William C. Bradbury, The Political Behavior of Korean and Chinese Prisoners of War in the Korean Conflict: A Historical Analysis (HUMRRO Technical Report 50, The George Washington University, August, 1958), p. 3.

<sup>29</sup> Sin-ming Chiu, "A History of the Chinese Communist Army" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Dept. of History, University of Southern California, August, 1958), p. 200.

<sup>30</sup> U.S., Congress, House, Committee on . . . , p. 19.

## CHAPTER V

### THE CHINESE COMMUNIST SOLDIER

#### The Dominance of Man

In an army, the size of the Chinese Communist Army, the effective management of the available resources is a mammoth task. To properly control an army of some two and half million men requires a system that must depend on the existence of capable leaders throughout a chain of command which consists of soldiers who are responsive to the demands of those leaders. Underlying this entire system of control is one basic element--that of the importance of the "man."

The Chinese Communists are firm believers in the importance of man to their entire system and regard him as occupying a position of superiority over even the most sophisticated weapons. Marshal Lin Piao emphasized this point in 1959 in answering the question of whether, as a result of the improved techniques and technical equipment of the army, the human factor was still of decisive significance:

Some comrades take the view that modern warfare differs from warfare in the past, that since the weapons and equipment available to our army in the past were inferior we had to emphasize dependence on man, on his bravery and wisdom, in order to win victories. They say that modern warfare is a war of technique, of steel and machinery, and that in the face of these things, man's role has to be relegated to a secondary place . . . Contrary to these people, we believe that while equipment and technique are important, the human factor is even more so.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Lin Piao, March Ahead Under the Red Flag of the Party's General Line and Mao Tse-tung's Military Thinking (Peking: Foreign Language Press, 1959), pp. 16-17.

This doctrine of the dominance of man over weapons also includes nuclear weapons for the Chinese Communists feel that the "spiritual 'A' bomb is more important than the material ones."<sup>2</sup> Their doctrine in this respect is not much unlike our own for they feel that nuclear weapons cannot occupy the battlefield or resolve a battle, and in close combat the reliance must be on the spirit and beliefs of the man and his willingness to sacrifice his life for his cause.

### The Soldier

In 1951, in an article for Foreign Affairs, Hanson Baldwin described the Chinese Communist soldier of the Korean War fame in this manner:

This, then, is the man. Like other soldiers he is bound by discipline, though for him it is a discipline more rigorous, more harsh, more blind than most. Its components are simultaneously economic and ideological, the carrot and the stick, the hope of reward and the fear of punishment. There is the natural subservience of the Chinese soldier coupled with the fanaticism of the Communist political commissar, and the gun-in-the-back, the fear of the punishment of the defectors' families. No matter what its component, it is an effective discipline and no one can doubt the battlefield courage and combat persistency of the Chinese. Yet lack of initiative and blind adherence to orders make for great tactical weaknesses.<sup>3</sup>

Praise of the Chinese Communist soldier in the Korean War came from all quarters. The consensus of opinion of the United States and United Nations commanders in Korea was that the Chinese were good soldiers who were ready to engage in close combat and capable of handling the modern

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<sup>2</sup>K.T.T.H., No. 26, July 13, 1961, cited in Ralph L. Powell, Politico-Military Relationships in Communist China, Policy Research Study, Bureau of Intelligence and Research (U.S. Department of State, October, 1963), p. 19.

<sup>3</sup>Hanson W. Baldwin, "China as a Military Power," Foreign Affairs, Vol. 30, No. 1 (October, 1951), p. 57.

equipment at its disposal.<sup>4</sup> Comments such as these quickly changed the false American concept of the Chinese as being un-warlike people: "terrible, tenacious soldiers," "technical skill far in excess of what Americans ever thought possible," and "military in their concepts and their ideals."

The traditional American concept of the Chinese soldier mentioned above had been a true one prior to the rise of communism in China. Before that time the soldier was held in low regard and treated with contempt by the general populace.<sup>5</sup> He was associated with the warlords who were themselves despised, and therefore the military profession was not one with great appeal for the peasantry. Since the Communist Party was dependent on the army for its assumption and retention of power, it undertook a campaign of publicizing the army as the "army of the people" in order to improve the prestige and social standing of the military and overcome this traditional contempt for the soldier.<sup>6</sup>

The success of this campaign brought about a complete reversal in the attitude of the Chinese people towards the soldier and he is now considered a member of the privileged class. This change in attitude was brought about through an intensified propaganda campaign, a concerted civic-action program, and the discipline of the soldiers themselves. Having won the support of the people for the army, the Party then granted special benefits to the soldier and raised his standard of living above that of the average peasant. The net result of this improved treatment

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<sup>4</sup>A. Niessel, "The Army of Communist China," Military Review, XXXV, 3 (June, 1955), p. 97.

<sup>5</sup>Department of the Army Pamphlet No. 30-51, Handbook on the Chinese Communist Army (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1960), p. 49.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

of the soldier is a source of manpower supply that far exceeds the demand, or so the Communists claim. The initiation of a system of conscription in 1955 (discussed in the following subsection) to replace that of "voluntary" service tends in part to offset this claim.

There is, however, no doubting the huge manpower pool from which the Chinese Communist Army may draw. The pool enables the army to be selective and to establish rigid physical, mental, and political requirements. The average soldier selected is physically fit and toughened by the life of hardship that marks the lot of the Chinese peasant. This typically peasant background serves to make the soldier immune to the hardships and discomforts of war, and his everyday needs are small.<sup>7</sup> The emphasis in the establishment of mental requirements has been on obtaining soldiers who have had some schooling and are capable of acquiring the technical knowledge essential to service in a modern army. Politically the soldier must be reliable and must in effect satisfy the requirements for Party membership. These requirements combine to provide a soldier who is accustomed to authority, submissive to discipline, and capable of becoming a professionally competent, politically reliable fighter.

The Party's opinion of their soldiers according to captured documents is that they are "young, active, obedient to authority, politically reliable, well indoctrinated and high in combat spirit; however, they are not accustomed to strict military life, lack discipline, have some petty bourgeois characteristics, and are affected by hardships or disasters in their home villages." Another observation of the Party was

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<sup>7</sup>R.C.W. Thomas, "The Chinese Communist Forces in Korea," Military Review, XXXII, 11 (February, 1953), p. 88.

that by the time the soldier was well-hardened to military life, he was eligible for discharge.<sup>8</sup>

### Conscription

The system of voluntary service which existed prior to 1955 was quite successful and provided a professional army that was suitable for the demands of the revolution. It did not provide, however, for an accumulation of reserves nor an established mobilization system. At the Second Meeting of the First National People's Congress in July 1955, the then Minister of National Defense, Marshal P'eng Teh-huai, delivered the following remarks concerning the adoption of a Military Service Law:

. . . the voluntary system which, lacking in a system of periodic call-up and demobilization, is unsuited to the purpose of accumulating powerful trained reserves, has already proven incapable of meeting the present requirements of our country. . . .<sup>9</sup>

The system of conscription requires that all males register upon reaching age eighteen. With approximately five to six million men reaching that age annually, only about one in twelve of those in the age group from 18-25 is conscripted.<sup>10</sup> An estimated 750,000 are called up annually and retained for a period of three years. This tour of service may be extended up to four months by the State Council for the ordinary soldier, and up to one year for noncommissioned soldiers, depending on the needs of the service and the desires of the individual. Following their tour of active service, the conscripts, along with those

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<sup>8</sup> K.T.T.H., No. 24, June 18, 1961, cited in Powell, p. 11.

<sup>9</sup> P'eng Teh-huai, "Report on the Draft Military Service Law," in CB, No. 337, July 20, 1955, p. 3.

<sup>10</sup> Edgar Snow, The Other Side of the River (New York: Random House, 1961), p. 287.

not conscripted, must fulfill a reserve obligation that terminates at age forty.<sup>11</sup>

Through conscription the army has become a carefully selected group in which only the most physically fit, politically reliable, and best educated individuals serve. As a result, military service is regarded as an honor rather than a sacrifice. Those selected are genuinely envied by their fellow villagers, and the sorrow of the families is eased by the special benefits that the government grants the families of its soldiers, such as increased rations and placing responsibility in the village to lend assistance as needed.<sup>12</sup> The average conscript enters the army with pride and a high degree of morale that provides a firm basis for the training to follow.

The effect of this conscription on the military leadership has been the creation of a requirement for a professional officer corps capable of coping with the training problems caused by a constant turnover in the army. Although the conscript is available for only a relatively short time in which to learn the complexities of modern warfare, the problem is alleviated somewhat by the higher caliber of individuals being conscripted and by the retention of key noncommissioned officers beyond their normal tour of service. Perhaps the most adverse effect of conscription was the impetus it gave to the creation of a professional officer corps with a resultant breakdown of the spirit of unity between the officers and the men.

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<sup>11</sup>"Military Service Law," Article 11 in CB, No. 344, August 8, 1955.

<sup>12</sup>Snow, p. 287.



### An Army Founded on Democracy

The Chinese Communist Army was founded along democratic lines that were described as follows by a military observer with the Chinese Communist Eighth Route Army during its formative years:

The Eighth Route Army has discarded the idea which prevails in Occidental armies that a leader, in order to be effective, must be accorded privileges and be set on a pedestal. Leadership is based entirely on merit. Even the customary labels by which military categories are known in Western armies have been discarded. The group which is customarily known as "officers" is called "leaders." The balance of the men of the army are known as "fighters." Leaders who command a unit the size of a brigade or larger are referred to as "commanders." The material condition of the leader is the same as that of the fighter. The quality of the clothes, food, and sleeping accommodations does not differ.<sup>13</sup>

The success of this army was to be based on a system of cooperation between the officers and men wherein the officers would teach the men and vice-versa. All would be on an equal footing with the only difference being in the duties assigned. The officers were not allowed to oppress the men nor were the senior officers permitted to oppress the junior officers.<sup>14</sup> There has been no change in this basic concept despite the distinctions created by the Military Service Law and the Regulations on the Service of Officers which established a system of ranks coincidental with the adoption of conscription. Marshal Lin Piao stressed the continuance of the democratic nature of the army in a statement made at a time when it appeared that the gap between the officer and the soldier was widening as a result of increasing professionalism among the officers

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<sup>13</sup> Evans Fordyce Carlson, The Chinese Army: Its Organization and Military Efficiency (New York: International Secretariat, Institute of Pacific Relations, 1940), pp. 35.

<sup>14</sup> Chu Teh, The Battle Front of the Liberated Areas (Peking, 1955) pp. 52, 55-56.

We have always held that the only difference between the officers and men is one of division of labour within the revolutionary ranks and, politically speaking and as far as personality is concerned, there is no distinction of high and low. Officers are not special figures above the rank and file. Only when the officers have affection and solicitude for the rank and file, when the rank and file respect the officers and when they respect each other, can relations of equality and brotherhood be established and the aim of unity between the officers and men be attained.<sup>15</sup>

To counter the effects of this split the Party instituted a series of programs designed to bring the officers closer to the men and restore the brotherly spirit. These programs, known as the "back to the ranks" movement and the "face to face" system of leadership, will be discussed in an examination of the officer corps.

With the democratic system that prevails in the Chinese Communist Army the soldier has the right to criticize the leadership openly and express dissatisfaction over the actions of the commanders. It also appears that in all actions taken towards the soldiers, an explanation is given and the actions are associated with the aims of the Party. Criticism of these actions would then be a criticism of Party policy rather than criticism of an individual--quite an effective way of forestalling complaints.

#### Motivation

Korea raised the question of the methods used to derive the maximum effectiveness from this Chinese Communist soldier. There was a general feeling that, given the opportunity to defect or surrender, this enemy soldier would do just that. The facts did not justify this feeling for, despite the eventual capture of some 21,000 prisoners, in the majorit

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<sup>15</sup> Lin Piao, p. 18.

of cases surrender took place only as a last resort. Battle reports are filled with praise for the fighting spirit of the Chinese Communist soldier but offer little, even in the way of speculation, as to why this soldier fought as hard and as well as he did. Some of the motivating factors have been pieced together from interrogations of prisoners of war and shed some light on the contributions, if any, of combat leadership on the soldiers' performance.

The methods used to motivate the riflemen for combat included a variety of techniques, the majority of which were coercive. One method was the maintenance of the improved status of the soldier and the generally improved physical, social, and psychological conditions that it brought to him.<sup>16</sup> This method together with the fabricated story that the Chinese were being committed in Korea to counter aggression by the Americans into North Korea and eventually into China, posed a threat to the material benefits of the soldier personally and to the existence of his country.<sup>17</sup> The traditional limitation placed on all the Communist populations, especially on the soldiers, of contact with the outside world facilitated the picture of American aggression that the Communist hierarchy had painted. Much credence is added to the use of this method by the decision of two-thirds of the Chinese prisoners of war to refuse repatriation to Communist control.<sup>18</sup> Contact with the outside world had

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<sup>16</sup>Frank J. Harris, Chinese Communist and North Korean Methods of Motivating Riflemen for Combat (Operations Research Office, The Johns Hopkins University, TM-ORO-T-44, 30 July 1953), p. 5.

<sup>17</sup>Beliefs of Enemy Soldiers About the Korean War (Operations Research Office, The Johns Hopkins University, ORO-T-39, 24 May 1952), p. 3.

<sup>18</sup>Samuel M. Meyers and William C. Bradbury, The Political Behavior of Korean and Chinese Prisoners of War in the Korean Conflict: A Historical Analysis (HumRRO Technical Report 50, The George Washington University, August, 1958), p. 28.

erased much of the picture of the United Nations' forces that the Chinese Communists had painted for their soldiers.

A second method of motivation involved the indoctrination techniques that are the trademark of communism. Together with the stress on the reason for the war in Korea, the soldier was subjected to attendance at criticism meetings and to the personal humiliation which they brought. At these meetings each soldier was made to participate in public self-criticism and the criticism of others designed to purge all personnel of tendencies to deviate from the Party doctrine.<sup>19</sup> The shame of these meetings had a cohesive effect that bound the individuals to the group through a common ideology, genuine or otherwise. Closely allied to this "bandwagon" technique was that of "pledge-signing" whereby, on a voluntary basis, the soldiers signed a statement pledging themselves to a certain form of behavior, such as a promise not to surrender.<sup>20</sup> Although voluntary, failure to sign such pledges marked the soldier as possibly suspect in his ideology. Fear of the consequences of such suspicion made the participation in this program virtually unanimous. This latter system can be likened to our own emphasis on the Code of Conduct to which we consider each of our fighting men bound. The effect of this pledge is seen in the statement of one Chinese prisoner of war interrogated early in the Korean War:

I think I am a coward because I was captured without dying to accomplish the duty of my country. To be captured is a shameful thing, because other comrades were killed but I am still living.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>19</sup>Harris, p. 5.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid.

<sup>21</sup>Meyers and Bradbury, p. 138.

According to Communist Party standards, capture in battle was wrong since it signified failure to accomplish the mission.

A third method of motivation used, and one which well explains the almost suicidal assaults of the Chinese, was that of instilling the belief that prisoners were killed immediately by the United Nations' troops.<sup>22</sup> This belief presented no outlet for defection to the front, and certainly none existed to the rear. The comments of one prisoner of war substantiate this latter point:

After seven days of marching, two of the enlisted men of the unit were shot by their leader because they were too weak and could not keep up with the rest of their unit. There were many men lagging behind, so the leader shot these two as an object lesson. He then put a lamp beside the bodies and a note which read "This is what happens to soldiers who drop back."<sup>23</sup>

Further comments by this prisoner to the effect that the soldiers were instructed in discipline and notified that the penalty for disobedience was death give a fairly good picture of one reason for the admirable conduct in battle.

The success of these methods of motivation is indicated by General Mark Clark in his book From the Danube to the Yalu:

Orders given to the leaders of the Chinese Communist armies in Korea and passed down to subordinate commanders never were questioned. They were fulfilled to the letter . . . This cohesion of the troops was achieved through political indoctrination and control.<sup>24</sup>

Nor was this manner of performance applicable only to the war in Korea. In the almost ten years that intervened between the active period of the

<sup>22</sup> Ibid, p. 43.

<sup>23</sup> Wang Tsun-ming, Anti-Communist: An Autobiographical Account of Chinese Communist Thought Reform (HumRRO Staff Memorandum, The George Washington University, November, 1954), p. 59.

<sup>24</sup> Mark W. Clark, From the Danube to the Yalu (New York: Harper, 1954), p. 88.

Korean War and the Sino-Indian border conflicts in 1962, control over the soldier had not lessened. Despite the introduction of conscription that removed the regular soldier from the scene and led to an army untested in combat, the Chinese Communist soldier performed like a veteran, displaying both a combat proficiency and loyalty superior to that exhibited in Korea. The modernization of the army was no handicap to the effectiveness of the motivation techniques for there were no known cases of surrender or defection to the Indian troops.<sup>25</sup> The skill of these Chinese troops during the Sino-Indian skirmishes in maintaining reliable communications, conducting rapid movements, and improving supply routes indicates, if not effective leadership, at least a workable command structure. It was this leadership or command that directed the modern construction equipment with which the Chinese Communists constructed a sixteen mile road in less than two weeks in support of their assault on India. Once again the Chinese soldiers displayed their motivation in the conduct of the familiar weighted, furious, and sudden pounding attacks against the Indian positions.<sup>26</sup>

Despite any criticism that their techniques might draw from other modern armies, the Chinese Communists have been successful in building a soldier who, willing or not, is capable of waging war in the furtherance of the Party's objectives.

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<sup>25</sup> New York Times, August 4, 1963, p. 1.

<sup>26</sup> Maharaj K. Chopra, "The Himalayan Border War: An Indian Military View," Military Review, XLIII, 5 (May, 1963), p. 15.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE LEADER

#### Modernization

Prior to any discussion of the final element in this leadership evaluation--the leader and the position which he occupies in the Chinese Communist Army today--it is best to view the event which necessitated the emergence of the officer corps to which this leader belongs, namely the process of modernization.

The attempts of the Chinese Communist forces in Korea to defeat by mass assault an enemy whose firepower was overwhelming resulted in enormous casualties that had placed the Chinese army on the brink of disaster by late winter of 1951. To forestall the defeat of this army, the Soviet Union provided vast quantities of military aid that turned the tide and permitted the Chinese Communist Army to fight the United Nations' forces to a standstill. Beyond this immediate result, the assistance served as the initial step in the Chinese Communist Army's entry into the age of modern conventional warfare.<sup>1</sup>

Under the direction of advisers from the Soviet Union, the People's Liberation Army proceeded with the task as outlined by Marshal Chu Teh of "transforming itself from the past, purely land force,

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<sup>1</sup> Raymond L. Garthoff, "Sino-Soviet Military Relations," in "Communist China and the Soviet Bloc," The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, Vol. 350 (September, 1963), p. 84.

depending in the main on infantry for fighting, to land, naval, and air forces with various kinds of modern technical equipment and capable of waging coordinated warfare between various arms in resisting invasion."<sup>2</sup> The modernization called for mastery of modern techniques of military science, skillful use of modern weapons and equipment, strict observance of military discipline, and the art of conducting coordination of all branches of the army.<sup>3</sup> Along with the technical improvements came the need for the introduction of unified command, unified organization and unified discipline. Although the discipline in the army was already severe, by Communist standards, it was felt that it must be strengthened in order to meet the needs of modern war for army units "to operate like a clock of precision, working for a unified objective in strict accordance with the rules."<sup>4</sup>

The model for the Chinese Communist Army during modernization was the Soviet Army whose advanced military science became the subject of intense study.<sup>5</sup> Schools were established for the study of the art of conducting modern warfare and the coordinated actions required by it. In many of the reports of the early progress of this modernization, reference was made to the great Soviet Army, citing it as a first class army, with excellent equipment, and with a high degree of efficiency.<sup>6</sup>

In 1953 Marshal Chu Teh reported that the army was carrying out a unified regular training program and that the transition from a lower

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<sup>2</sup>Chu Teh, "Speech at Meeting of 24th Anniversary of Formation of PLA," NCNA, July 31, 1951, in CB, No. 208, p. 5.

<sup>3</sup>Hsiao Hua, "The Chinese People's Liberation Army Marching Toward Modernization," NCNA, July 31, 1952, CB, No. 208, p. 37.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 39.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

<sup>6</sup>Huang Yi-mei, "The People's Liberation Army is Marching Towards Modernization," Daily Worker (Peking), July 31, 1955, in SCMP, No. 1163, p. 27.



stage to a higher stage army had begun.<sup>7</sup> With the groundwork completed, the Communists implemented a general reorganization of the army in 1954 assisted by an enlarged Russian Military Mission. This reorganization was aimed at modernization, to include some mechanization of the Chinese Communist Army. There is little doubt that this modernization took place almost totally with equipment obtained from the Soviet Union and financed by loans which amounted to approximately two billion dollars (U.S.) by mid-1957.<sup>8</sup>

However, true modernization meant decreased emphasis on outside support and emphasis on industrial production within the country. With this goal, the emphasis in Communist China shifted from agriculture to industry. In 1959 China was almost self-sufficient in the production of small arms and ammunition but still relied upon the Soviet Union for combat aircraft, tanks, heavy artillery, petroleum products, advanced communications equipment, and other important material.<sup>9</sup> This emphasis on industry increased as friction between the Soviet Union and Communist China arose over ideological differences. This rift saw an end to the introduction of Soviet equipment and the beginning of an economic crisis resulting from the drain of industrialization. By 1961 the rapid modernization had almost ground to a halt as a result of the cut-off of Soviet supplies and the return to agriculture in an effort to stem the economic crisis that industrialization had brought.

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<sup>7</sup>Chu Teh, "Speech at Peking Meeting in Celebration of PLA Day - 26th Anniversary," NCNA, August 1, 1953, in SCMP, No. 623, p. 3.

<sup>8</sup>Allen S. Whiting, Contradictions in the Moscow-Peking Axis (Santa Monica, California: The RAND Corporation, RM-1992, September 24, 1957), pp. 5-6.

<sup>9</sup>A. Doak Barnett, Communist China and Asia (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1960), p. 114.

As will be seen in subsequent paragraphs, this modernization had a tremendous impact on the leadership of the army as it did in fact on the entire Communist philosophy. This modernization was a revolutionary transition for the entire mainland. It involved newer weapons, newer tactics, and newer techniques of training; it involved a new attitude within the military leadership towards democracy in the army; it involved controversy between the older generation of leaders with their reliance on experience, and the younger generation which advocated change; and it involved a change in strategy, both military and economic.<sup>10</sup> The problems which arose as a result of the modernization were many and major but only those which affected the military leadership will be touched upon here. In this category, the problems stem indirectly from modernization and directly from one result of modernization - the emergence and growing professionalism of the officer corps.

#### Emergence of the Officer Corps

Concurrently with a modernization of equipment and organization the Chinese leadership realized that the commander of revolutionary days was not suited to the requirements of command in modern warfare. The changing nature of the army from that of a revolutionary, volunteer, primarily infantry force to a conscripted, all-service army capable of waging modern war called for a new, modern commander with the ability to absorb the complicated technology and apply coordinated techniques. The experience of the revolutionary commanders, acquired through the protracted revolutionary war, was not adequate in a modern army according to Marshal P'eng Teh-huai who directed that all units "conduct ceaseless

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<sup>10</sup> Allan S. Nanes, "Communist China's Armed Forces," Current Scene (Hong Kong), Vol. I, No. 16 (October, 1961), p. 3.

training so as to raise the art of generalship and organizational ability of all commanders and leading cadres to a new level."<sup>11</sup>

In compliance with this directive, the task of developing an officer corps got underway. Regular military, political, and cultural academies were established for the training of large numbers of cadres in the advanced military sciences and the art of command of combined operations in a modern army.<sup>12</sup> These cadres were to form the backbone of the new army. What was now required was an input of raw material into the training cycle.

The ascendancy to power of the Communist regime in 1949 brought forth some younger military leaders who, in contrast to their superiors, had received some formal military education either in Chinese Communist short-term academies or in the Soviet Union. These younger officers provided the initial input and are those who today occupy the General Staff and comparable positions. They had been recruited young and had little experience outside the army.<sup>13</sup> Special efforts were made to give them advanced training at military academies, such as the Red Army Academy at Juichin, which provided some useful background despite the brevity of the course (from four to six months duration) and the division of time between political and military studies.<sup>14</sup> Their ability to change with the changing technology of the army placed them in an advantageous position

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<sup>11</sup>"The Honorable Mission of the PLA," JMJP, editorial in NCNA, July 24, 1954, in SCMP, No. 856, p. 55.

<sup>12</sup>"PLA Gets Stronger Every Day Through Modernization and Regularization," NCNA, February 28, 1954, in SCMP, No. 760, p. 7.

<sup>13</sup>S.M. Chiu, "Chinese Communist Military Leadership," Military Review, XXXIX, 12 (March, 1960), p. 60.

<sup>14</sup>Edgar Snow, Red Star Over China (London: Victor Gollancz Ltd., 1937), pp. 111-112.

Those who lacked this ability either went by the wayside or, in the case of those who had distinguished themselves in the revolution, were promoted to the top level Party positions not requiring the application of technical ability or close contact with the army.

In addition to the development of those officers already in the army, a campaign was initiated to recruit cadre trainees. An appeal was made to the young people with some education to become future officers. They were urged to respond enthusiastically to the call of the fatherland and fill the "posts of glory" that awaited them.<sup>15</sup> And respond they did, for on February 1, 1951 it was reported that some 250,000 had applied for enrollment in officer schools of whom more than fifty percent were Communist Party or Youth League members.<sup>16</sup> This initial group of candidates formed the nucleus of the officer corps for the years to follow. Prior to commissioning, these cadets underwent a course of training of approximately eighteen months duration with the emphasis on political instruction. Upon completion of this training the cadets served six months in the ranks before being commissioned.<sup>17</sup>

And so, along with the initiation of a modernization program for the organization and materiel of the army, the Communist Party saw this need for a competent officer corps, loyal to the Party. The recruitment, training, and political indoctrination of the youth of the country was to provide this need while simultaneously insuring the support of the Party by the army.

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<sup>15</sup>"The Glorious Post of Our Patriotic Youths," JMJP editorial in NCNA, December 1, 1950, in SCMP, No. 21, pp. 15-16.

<sup>16</sup>NCNA, February 1, 1951, in SCMP, No. 62, p. 21.

<sup>17</sup>Edgar O'Ballance, The Red Army of China (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Inc., 1963), p. 210.

### Growth of Professionalism in the Officer Corps

The mere existence of an officer corps is not adequate insurance that a modern army will be properly led. In yielding to the requirement for modernization in the army, the Party members were forced to recognize that the leadership of this army required the adoption of doctrine that was opposed to their basic beliefs of a democratic army. They realized the strict discipline that the proper employment of modern arms called for was not available in the revolutionary army. The common identity of the officers and men was not conducive to the formulation of the decisions required in modern warfare. Modernization demanded the institution of a professional officer corps but professional excellence and political requirements first required some reconciliation.

There was no open recognition of a separate and distinct officer corps during the early years of modernization but the officer corps was becoming regularized. Efficient management of government affairs necessitated that the Party leaders become more and more involved in the problems of government, causing them to drift from their former close contact with the daily direction of military affairs. Military affairs became the responsibility of the military leaders at lower than the governmental level who made military affairs their exclusive field of activity. The result was that military policy was determined by the Party leaders whose relationship with the military was solely based on their experiences in revolutionary warfare. The execution of the policy, however, was the responsibility of those lower level military leaders who were daily living with the problems and complexities of a modern army.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>18</sup>Ellis Joffe, "Contradictions in the Chinese Army," Far Eastern Economic Review, XLI, 2 (July, 1963), p. 123.

This wide variance of policy with reality served to separate the officer corps from the Party leaders who, in their opinion, lacked adequate military knowledge.

The Party was not completely blind to the demands of modern warfare for it approved the introduction of conscription in 1955 which amounted to open recognition of the need for a regular officer corps. The adoption of the concept of "a nation in arms" to back up a large national army composed of citizen-soldiers on active duty for only three years, was the real indication of a shift in the officer corps from amateurism to professionalism.<sup>19</sup> The groundwork for the emergence of a regularized and formalized officer corps was laid by the policy of conscription but it was the adoption, in July, 1955, of the Regulations on the Service of Officers that was to formally acknowledge the existence of this corps. The adoption of these regulations was a logical sequel to the introduction of conscription as recognized in Article 1 of the Regulations which states:

The Regulations are enacted in line with the change in the country's military service from a voluntary to a compulsory basis and in order to further the building up of the Chinese People's Liberation Army as a modern, regular army.<sup>20</sup>

The Regulations on the Service of Officers spells out the sources for officers on active service as follows:

- (1) Graduates of military academies;
- (2) Graduates of advanced military technical schools or technical institutes;
- (3) Non-commissioned officers who pass selective examinations at military academies or are qualified for

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<sup>19</sup>Samuel P. Huntington, The Soldier and the State (Cambridge, Mass. Economic Review, XLI, 2 (July, 1963), p. 123.

<sup>20</sup>Regulations on the Service of Officers of the Chinese People's Liberation Army, NCNA, February 9, 1955, in CB, No. 312, Article 1.

officer duties after having gone through special training courses approved by the Minister of National Defense;

(4) Individual reserve officers called up.<sup>21</sup>

Actual selection of officers and appointment to duties is based on their "political quality and professional ability."<sup>22</sup> To be noted here is the stress on the political reliability of the officers both in the initial commissioning and in their subsequent assignments.

One of the major breakthroughs made in the adoption of the regulations was the institution of a system of ranks. This was a formal recognition of the distinction between the officers and men and the existence of a regular officer corps. To anticipate the reaction that this reversal of the "equality" principle in the army would bring, the People's Daily began to publish editorials explaining the need for adoption of the rank system in this manner:

Following the enforcement of the compulsory military system and the equipping of the army with modern weapons it is demanded that the training and operation of the military units must rigidly follow regular systems and regulations, the status and mutual relationships of the officers and men must be specifically stipulated, and the organizational and disciplinary spirit of the army should be further elevated. The creation of military ranks will, therefore, facilitate the raising of the organizational and disciplinary spirit of the military units so that they can execute their military tasks. With rank differences, the army will be able to perform its duties according to strict military organization and procedure under the new conditions of complex equipment, quick movement, and coordinated operation.<sup>23</sup>

The editorials further explain that the old system was satisfactory while units were scattered, equipment simple, branches not varied, and the volunteers served together for an extended period of time. Then,

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<sup>21</sup>Ibid., Article 5.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., Article 25.

<sup>23</sup>"Chinese Communist Military Honors," CB, No.368, November 15, 1955, p. 16.

there was no national authority to confer ranks.<sup>24</sup> This new ability to confer ranks was not intended to destroy completely the unity that had traditionally existed between the officers and men. On the contrary, it was seen as entrusting the officers with a greater responsibility towards the care of their men, and serving to unite them more closely.<sup>25</sup>

The complexities of modern warfare, compounded by the difficulties imposed by conscription with its demands for training approximately 750,000 new soldiers annually, served to completely monopolize the professional officer's attentions. Specialization became a necessity and specialization fostered professionalism. As this professionalism grew, elements of the officer corps composed of young men devoting their lives to the military and cognizant of the needs for the creation of a strong army, began to resent the dual system of command existing in the army.<sup>26</sup> Certain factions began to take issue with the interference of the Party in army affairs, asserting that "collective leadership of Party committees will impede better judgment and the concentration of command." These comments, published in the official Liberation Army newspaper, went on to say that since certain factions considered the infusion of politics into military matters detrimental to the conduct of modern warfare, they began to "openly advocate the liquidation of the system of Party committee leadership."<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>24</sup>"Important Measures in the Modernization and Regularization of China's Armed Forces," JMJP, September 28, 1955, in SCMP, No. 1147, p. 4.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., p. 5.

<sup>26</sup>Ellis Joffe, "The Communist Party and the Army," Contemporary China, Vol. IV (1959-1960), (Hong Kong University Press, 1961), p. 63.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid., p. 64.



This threat of professionalism to the Party leadership was caused by the intense involvement of the officer corps with the technical problems of running the military machine. Such an involvement caused the officers to place the professional military considerations above the political ones.<sup>28</sup> The problem now facing the Party was to increase the political awareness of the officers without decreasing the emphasis on the military considerations. Various programs or "movements" were initiated and shifts in personnel took place with the specific purpose of increasing this political awareness. The interrelation of military ability with political ability, as desired by the Party, is best summarized in an extract of an article that appeared in the People's Daily and outlined the "Orientation of Political Work for the Army:"

The professional and technical ability of army personnel is an important factor of the fighting strength of an army. This ability is the ability to handle weapons and equipment and the ability to command the armed forces . . . A commander must have the ability to command and (be) well versed in tactics . . . If the fighting strength of an army is to be improved, the professional and technical ability of the commanders and fighters must be improved and the military ability of political workers must also be improved. It is unquestionably wrong to overlook this link.<sup>29</sup>

The intent of this article appears to be a re-orientation of the political officer towards modernization. To effectively control the army politically it was necessary for the political officers to understand as much about modern warfare as the military commanders. Such knowledge would lead to political decisions and policies compatible with military.

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<sup>28</sup> Alice Langley Hsieh, Communist China's Strategy in the Nuclear Era (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1962), p. 23.

<sup>29</sup> Fan Ke, "The Orientation of Political Work for the Army," JMJP, July 28, 1962, in SCMP, No. 2556, p. 6.

operations and close the gap between the military and the political leadership.

### The Party's Answer to Professionalism

In allowing the emergence of a professional officer corps the Party soon discovered that it had a thorn in its side. Here was an organization essential to continued strength in its armed forces but a definite potential threat to political supremacy. The actions of the Party beginning in 1958 were designed to erase some of the problems that modernization, and subsequently the professionalism of the officer corps, had caused. These problems were:

- (1) Neglect of the traditional unity of officers and soldiers, and higher and lower levels;
- (2) Neglect of the function of the "democracy";
- (3) In the exercise of leadership, stress of order and administrative means while neglecting the "mass line" and overlooking ideological work;
- (4) Dogmatism in military school education and troop training;
- (5) Loss of the army's close relations with local Party organizations and government.<sup>30</sup>

The system of ranks was the beginning of additional privileges for the officer and his family. These privileges permitted the officer to maintain a higher standard of living and allowed the family to live with him rather than labor in the villages. As one of the first moves against the growing professionalism, the dependents of the officers were ordered

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<sup>30</sup> Communist China, 1956 (Hong Kong: Union Research Institute, August, 1957, p. 188.

to return to their villages and get down to work. Further steps to reduce the gap between the officers and the people were a reduction in the quantity of provisions to the officer and his dependents to the level of the remainder of the population.<sup>31</sup>

In order that the traditional unity of the officers and men be maintained, and to dispel any notions that the army had lost its democratic nature, a practice was instituted in 1958 whereby each officer was to serve as a rank-and-file soldier for one month out of each year. This practice became known as the "officers to the ranks" movement. According to the directive initiating this movement, its purpose was "for the cadres to link up with the rank-and-file, temper themselves, sum up their experiences, and so improve their leadership and carry forward the glorious People's Liberation Army tradition of perfect unity between officers and men, superiors and subordinates, soldiers and civilians."<sup>32</sup> With the emphasis coming from Mao Tse-tung himself, this soon became a mass movement and during the first six months it was estimated that over 150,000 cadres, including over 160 general officers, had gone to the ranks and served as privates.<sup>33</sup> This program continues in effect today but from the lack of reference to it in the mainland periodicals it is quite possible that it has been relaxed somewhat. The program is not compatible with the discipline that the Party feels is required to obtain the ready response necessary in the operation of a

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<sup>31</sup>Ithiel de Sola Pool, Satellite Generals: A Study of Military Elites in the Soviet Sphere (Stanford University Press, 1955), p. 125.

<sup>32</sup>"Service in the Ranks System for All PLA Cadres," NCNA, September 21, 1958, in SCMP, No. 1861, p. 9.

<sup>33</sup>Chien Tsai-tao, "Army Officers, Upholding Their Fine Tradition, Go to the Companies to Serve as Privates," JMJP, April 27, 1959, in CB, No. 579, p. 5.

modern army. The prestige of the officer suffers by the obvious attempt of the movement to submerge the identity of the officers as a separate class.

Closely allied to the "officers to the ranks" movement was another program known as "face to face" leadership. This system requires the officers to "work in the units at the lower levels to give concrete guidance or work as enlisted men in the companies, eating, living, laboring, drilling, and playing together with the rank-and-file."<sup>34</sup> This type of leadership was to improve the work of the units, allow the officers to lead by example, and give the officers valuable and close contact with the men. This system was distinct from the "ranks" movement since it did not cause the officer to lose his identity. It amounted to an extended visit by the commanders to the lowest level units. The presence of these commanders would enable them to see the actual conditions in the companies and offer concrete support. In describing the effects of this program, the People's Daily wrote that "the cadres were reported to have solved investigation problems, promptly summarized and promoted experience, effectively strengthened the building of the company units, and improved the headquarters leadership over company units and basic level organizations."<sup>35</sup>

These movements were measures taken directly against the officers to orient them to the "mass line" and to the unity of the officers and men. They were by no means the only measures taken. An overall indoctrination program was called for to counter the contradictions that had

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<sup>34</sup>"PLA Officers Cultivate 'Experimental Plots'," NCNA, September 19, 1958, in SCMP, No. 1861, p. 8.

<sup>35</sup>JMJP, 1 April 1962, p. 11.

arisen between the officers and the Party. These elements of conflict are summarized by Ellis Joffe in his article on "Contradictions in the Chinese Army" as follows:

- (1) Relations between officers and men - The officers were at variance with the Party over the latter's continued adherence to the human element as the prime factor in determining the outcome of future wars. The officers claimed that technology had replaced the human element. A second element of conflict was the belief of the officers that centralism and discipline should replace "democracy" in the operation of the army.
- (2) Relations between officers and civilians - The officer contention was that the army was no longer a guerrilla force dependent on the people for support, while the Party accused the officers of becoming high handed in their dealings with the civilian population.
- (3) Political controls in the army - As previously mentioned, the officers felt that the system of political control was incompatible with the command structure for modern war in which the requirement would be for smooth and swift operations. The Party position adhered to the principle of the Party commanding the gun.
- (4) Employment of the army for non-military purposes - The details of this conflict will be brought out in the chapter on the environmental factors, however, it amounts to an objection by the army to the dissipation of the army's resources on non-military type projects which interfere with the full time requirement for training.
- (5) The "Everyone a Soldier" Movement - Another environmental factor, this is an objection to the diversion of men and equipment from the army for the task of training the vast militia demanded by Chairman Mao Tse-tung.<sup>36</sup>

The Communist Party rose to power in China through its ability to apply political control over all its elements, and emphasis on political control during periods of stress has been its primary weapon. With the officer corps threatening to upset many of the doctrines upon which the Party was based, the Party resorted to political indoctrination

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<sup>36</sup>Joffe, "Contradictions in the . . .," p. 123.

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he adhered to the Party position in all the elements of conflict previously mentioned.<sup>42</sup> This speech marked the end, at least temporarily, of the growth of professionalism and again raised political work to the position of prominence.

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<sup>42</sup>Peking Review, II, 40 (October, 1959), passim.

## CHAPTER VII

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

#### Summation

The brief history of the Chinese Communist Army has seen it grow from a small guerrilla force into an army with a peak strength of approximately four and a half million men at the time of the Communist takeover on the China mainland. This latter figure has been pared down to the present strength of 2,600,000 men who comprise a capable conventional force that looms as a major threat to the security of the independent nations of Southeast Asia and to world peace. Previous chapters have described the growth of this army from its inception, through the struggles against the Nationalists, the Japanese, and the United Nations' forces in Korea, to the modern army of today; the environment in which the army leadership exists; the soldier over whom this leadership is exercised; and the role of the leaders who exercise this leadership.

The Chinese Communist Army was the tool through which the Communist Party rose to prominence in China. During the formative years of the army, the Party realized the necessity of maintaining tight control over the army as a prerequisite to maintenance of its position of prominence. To achieve this goal, and to gain the support of the people for the army and the Party, the discipline within the army was emphasized. The maintenance of this discipline depended on an effective system of political control which would insure the ready response of the army to the demands



of the Party. The early interspersing of political cadres in the army and the introduction of political indoctrination measures insured the desired control.

To encourage the peasant to enlist, service in the army was made quite attractive. In the very beginning, the army was founded on the principle of democracy whereby officers and soldiers alike were considered equals, and the unity and camaraderie of officers and men were stressed; the identity of the soldier as a peasant was maintained, and he was not subjected to the harsh treatment he had experienced under the Nationalist leaders; he was given preferential treatment by receipt of more than adequate rations and by inclusion in any land redistribution that took place in his native village; finally, the families of the servicemen received considerations that relieved the soldier from worry over conditions at home. With these measures, service in the army became desirable and selection was deemed an honor.

To conquer the traditional attitude of the peasants that the soldiers were an undesirable lot, the Party instituted a mass program of military civic action. This program together with the firm discipline that existed within the army resulted in a greatly improved image of the soldier on the peasants. The favorable attitude which this new image produced among the peasants did not cause them to actively support the Communist Party in its revolution against the Nationalists, but they did remain passive, a key factor in the success of an army operating with guerrilla tactics. The new image of the Chinese Communist soldier was in sharp contrast to the peasant's image of the Nationalist soldier and was instrumental in causing defections among the Nationalist forces.

An unpopular government, the passiveness of the population, and the high discipline and morale of the Chinese Communist soldiers were factors which contributed to the successful overthrow of the Nationalist regime. The overthrow was effected by revolutionary, guerrilla-type warfare which became the trademark of the Chinese Communist Army. From the year of its formation in 1927 until the conquest of the mainland in 1949, the Chinese Communist Army remained a peasant army, ill-equipped, but well-led by politically indoctrinated cadres. The conversion of this revolutionary force to a peacetime army was influenced by several conditions. First, the responsibilities of government began to draw many of the political cadres from the military ranks, leaving military affairs strictly to military leaders. Secondly, the Korean War brought a realization that the revolutionary army was inadequate for the demands of modern warfare. And finally, China did not have the industrial base to support a modern army.

The significance of these facts was to be far-reaching and was to influence the military leadership in the army for years to come. The lack of an industrial capability caused the Chinese hierarchy to look for a source of outside support which was readily available from the Soviet Union. With Soviet assistance the Chinese Communist Army reorganized into a modern, conventional fighting force. This modernization brought with it increased demands for technological ability within the army and for increased training time for the soldiers. Control of military affairs became a full time effort; and, as these affairs were left to the military leaders because of the preoccupation of the political leaders with the affairs of government, the military leaders began to develop a degree of professionalism. This growth of professionalism was

further encouraged by the introduction of conscription and the institution of a system of military ranks among the officers. Technological advances in the army were incompatible with a constant input of conscriptees lacking the basic educational training upon entry into the service and eligible for discharge by the time they had achieved a degree of proficiency in military training. The pressures created by the requirement to maintain a vast military training establishment, and the competition between the military and political leaders for the training time of the soldiers gave rise to a tendency for the military leaders to resent political control.

Although it was the conscription system which gave impetus to the regularization of the officer corps, this same system and the pressures it created were a hindrance to the modernization of the army. With an annual turnover of approximately 25 percent of the army strength, training in fundamentals was a principal and continuing task. This modernization suffered further setbacks through the use of the army as a labor force and through the organization of a mass militia. Both of these programs diverted resources from the army, both in manpower and materiel. Other Party policies such as the commune program and the "Great Leap Forward" brought about economic disasters that seriously affected the morale within the army and caused shortages of equipment.

The growing Sino-Soviet rift cut off the only outside source of modern military equipment and, together with the Party announcement of a return to agricultural rather than industrial development, served to effectively halt the modernization within the army. This entire series of reversals gave rise to a growing resentment of the military leaders towards the Party and the political controls over the army. This resent-

ment loomed as a threat to the Party supremacy over the armed forces and was eliminated through the time-honored Communist tools of purge and indoctrination, and a stepped-up program of political control.

This very briefly traces the background for the evaluation of the leadership of the Chinese Communist Army today. Prior to making any evaluation, however, a resume of the manner in which the military leadership functions, bringing together the discussion of the previous chapters, is appropriate.

The military leader in the Chinese Communist Army benefits from many aspects of the Communist system in the exercise of his command functions. To begin with, he is given a soldier who is willing to serve, is physically capable, and has been accustomed to a life of hardship. The political reliability of this soldier and the constant indoctrination of the Communist control system insures his ready responsiveness to the demands of the Party leaders. The favorable treatment of the soldier adds to the desirability of army service and promotes a willingness to follow orders. With the basic education that the soldier receives prior to beginning his military training, he is capable of absorbing the technical instruction necessary in a modern army.

On the negative side, the average soldier is a conscriptee who is returned to civilian life at about the time he is properly trained. This presents a requirement for a constant and intense training cycle during which the military leader competes unsuccessfully with political demands for the valuable training time. Further negating the leadership position of the officer is the tool which the Party uses to maintain the morale of the soldiers, that is the emphasis on the democracy of the army, a principle which tends to destroy the prestige of the officer and lower his morale.

This prestige suffers further by the system of dual command that is characteristic of the Chinese Communist Army. Under the doctrine of political supremacy, the military commander, although theoretically the equal of the political commander, actually occupies a subordinate position. With the necessity to refer matters of decision to the collective leadership of the Party committees or branches, the role of the military commander is reduced to that of executor of Party policies. He bears the responsibility for the military affairs of the unit but does not have the corresponding authority.

Despite the submerged role of the military commander, the requirements of modern warfare have given rise to conflict between the military and political leaders. The maintenance of an army capable of engaging in limited war with any major power involved requirements that outdated many of the Party's military policies. The decision of the Party to adhere to these policies caused dissatisfaction among the military leaders. With the swiftness of modern warfare and its demand for immediate decisions, the established process of dual command and collective leadership was considered unsatisfactory by the military leaders but was retained by the Party. The requirement for rapid reaction in modern war and the prospect of directing men into the face of mass destruction weapons brought a demand for strict discipline that could not be satisfied under the Party's policies of the unity of officers and men and leadership by patient persuasion. Other sources of conflict were over the Party's advocacy of a massive militia to back up a small regular army. Military leaders were more in favor of a larger professional army with less reliance on the untrained militia which was draining men and equipment from the

regular establishment.

Nor were these the only sources of conflict; there was friction over the rift with the Soviet Union that eliminated a source of the modern weapons essential to modernization, particularly nuclear weapons; there was opposition to the commune program and to the "Great Leap Forward", both of which had served to lower troop morale and limit the input of military equipment to the army; there was doubt over the validity of the Party's policy of the importance of man over weapons, especially nuclear weapons; and finally, there was restiveness over the Party's attempts to strengthen political control and indoctrination in the army in an effort to eliminate the previous sources of discontent.

These sources of conflict were the indications of the growing professionalism of the officer corps with its desire to occupy a position of strictly military leadership less dependent on the many factors over which it had no control, such as political control and economic policies. Since any such professionalism was considered a threat to the continued Party leadership and supremacy over the army, repressive measures were taken that effectively eliminated this growing tendency and reasserted the policies of the Party. Through indoctrination and purge, the outward signs of dissatisfaction have been removed and the political control of the army through collective Party leadership continues in effect.

#### Characteristics of the Military Leadership

From the discussion of the preceding chapters, the leadership in the Chinese Communist Army unfolds as a type which is quite unlike that in existence in any of the Western armies. Except for cases of

extreme emergency when the commander is authorized to exercise individual leadership, the army is operated under a system of collective leadership. This leadership is dominated by the Party through its system of Party branches and committees. With all important decisions being made by these branches and committees, the commander's role is primarily the execution and supervision of the Party's decisions.

This present form of leadership is not intended to function only in peacetime but is expected to be applicable also in war. Rather than hampering the commander on the battlefield, collective leadership is supposed to provide for more competent decisions. Military commanders disagree with this analysis and feel that the necessity for rendering of swift decisions on the battlefield makes the system of collective leadership a cumbersome, very unsatisfactory process. If such an opinion is valid, it may be that collective leadership could prove detrimental to the Chinese Communist Army if its opponents create a need for rapid reaction through swift offensive action. Depending on the latitude that is given to the military commander in determining what is an extreme emergency, the army could suffer defeat while awaiting the decision of the collective leadership.

Another important aspect of the leadership is the system of dual command that exists through the assignment of both a military and a political commander to each unit. Although theoretically equal in authority to the political chain of command, the military chain is actually subordinated to it, a condition which provides a fertile field for tension. The overlap of responsibility, the primacy of political activities, and the more favorable position of the political commander within the Party branch or committee, place the military commander at

a distinct disadvantage. These tensions are eased somewhat by the fact that in the growing majority of cases both the political and military commanders are Party members with supposedly similar ideologies and goals. Despite a division of responsibility between both commanders, the system does place two commanders in each unit and provides a situation that violates the principle of unity of command as practiced by the military leaders throughout history. Although not completely similar to the system of dual command that existed in the Roman force at Cannae in the year 216 B.C. when the two Roman leaders alternated daily the exercise of command, the Chinese Communist leadership system may well result in a fate for its units similar to that of this Roman force whose near annihilation was due in part to its unsatisfactory command structure. This corollary is only applicable when the Chinese Communist military leader is equated to the individual commander as we visualize him. Unity of command does exist considering that the real counterpart to our single commander is not the Chinese Communist political-military commander combination but its collective leadership as exercised by the Party branches and committees.

Under the present system of leadership, the personal effectiveness of the military commander as a leader is dependent in large measure on his standing with the Party, his influence with the Party branch or committee, and his relationship with his political counterpart. The system is not one which fosters initiative or promotes personal ambition among the officers, nor does it lend itself to the development of decisiveness. The forced dependency of the commander on the committees for decisions tends to destroy many of the desirable leadership traits. Subordination of the individual to the Party is a policy that is even more



applicable to the military leadership than it is to the population in general. Such a policy prevents the emergence of any single individual with a power that might threaten the Party leadership. The effect of this measure is a destruction or at least a submergence of any tendencies towards individual leadership.

The military commander bears the responsibility for the military affairs of his unit but lacks the corresponding authority and prestige to accomplish his tasks through personal leadership. The Party recognizes the need for a regular officer corps but realizes also the threat to the Party of the growth of professionalism among the officers. Innumerable obstacles are placed in the path of the officer to prevent his emergence as an individual in competition with the Party for the loyalty and respect of the soldier. Any relationship of leader to subordinate that might place the commander in a posture of prestige greater than that occupied by the Party is destroyed by emphasis on the loyalty of the soldier to the Party rather than to the unit or its commander. Esprit de corps is not fostered for its development would focus attention on the more capable officers and give them a power which the Party does not want them to have. The subordination of the military commander to the political commander, and the image that is built of the political officer as the benefactor of the men further serves to increase the gap between the soldier and his military commander. Through these measures there is an absence of any sound relationship between the military commander and his men on which potential individual military leadership may be built.

Decreasing the commander's effectiveness even further is the Party's adherence to the principle of democracy within the army. Constant

stress of this principle, manifested in the policy of sending all officers to serve in the ranks for one month of each year, and the program of face-to-face leadership, has tended to degrade the officer corps, lower its prestige, and submerge its identity as a separate and distinct class. This democracy further limits the commander's effectiveness by permitting and encouraging the use of criticism of the commander's actions by the soldiers. Every action of the leader is subject to close scrutiny and any deviationist tendencies from Party policy are quickly revealed. Under the principle of democracy in the army, any form of authoritative leadership is taboo; and the approved method is that of leadership by patient persuasion. A conclusion that may be drawn from the reliance on the democratic system within the army is not only that the effectiveness of the commander is seriously impaired but also that the soldier's reliance for leadership is directed towards the Party rather than the military commander. Any breakdown of the functioning of the collective leadership on the battlefield may well cause the soldier to turn to his military commander for guidance only to find a hollow shell of a leader, void of all ability to seize the reins and drive the unit to victory. The devastating effects of modern weapons against the Chinese Communist soldier may destroy his responsiveness to leadership by patient persuasion and create a need for a more authoritative type of leadership which the military commander is unqualified to exercise.

Despite the Party's recognition of the need for a regular officer corps brought about by the modernization and conscription in the armed forces, it refuses to allow that corps to develop the professionalism essential to a modern army. When conflict arose as a result of the inability of the officers to reconcile a desire for professional excellence

of the army with political requirements, increased political controls were imposed. In addition to the control exercised by the political committees and the political commanders, and the submersion of the identity of the officer corps through the emphasis on the democratic nature of the army, the officers were subjected to periodic ideological campaigns to correct any thinking not in line with that of the Party. These campaigns have generated fear and suspicion through the use of criticism of self and of others, and have lowered the prestige of the officer corps. Under the measures now employed by the Party professionalism is not likely to emerge so long as the political leadership retains its primary position. With the arrival on the scene of a second generation of political leaders it is possible that the military will make another bid for establishment of Party-Army relationships that allow for the exercise of leadership through military rather than political chains of command. A more likely possibility, based on the continued strengthening of Party leadership through careful selection of key personnel, is that the success of the indoctrination of the officers, their desire to retain what status they now have, and the effect of continuing submission to the present system will prevent any serious disagreements between the political and military leadership.

The dissatisfaction that exists as a result of the conflict of the military desires for modernization and professionalism with the political desires for adherence to traditional policies that have thus far been successful has been further increased by the variance over military doctrine. The military leaders, aware of the destructive power of modern weapons and the requirements of modern warfare, have been urging the adoption of a doctrine which places greater reliance on modern weapons.

and tactics. However, the Party continues to place its reliance on the Maoist military doctrine of revolutionary warfare. Although this doctrine is suitable for the type of war that the Chinese Communist Army may face in Southeast Asia, it will probably prove unsatisfactory under conditions of a large scale, nuclear war.

In the way of summary, it is considered worthwhile to apply the identified characteristics of the leadership to a level such as that of the Chinese Communist division commander, drawing certain conclusions based on the evidence already uncovered. The typical commander is an individual dedicated to his profession and aware of the complexities of modern war. His desire to achieve maximum proficiency of his unit is handicapped by the many factors which are at the same time the strength of the Communist system, namely the dependency on political control for all decisions, the use of the systems of collective leadership and dual command, the maintenance of the morale of the soldier at the expense of causing dissatisfaction among the officers, adherence to the principle of democracy within the army and stress on leadership by patient persuasion, and the continuing use of the army for non-military tasks. He is impatient with Party policies that have brought a halt to modernization and prevented the modern equipping of his unit; he is fearful that continued reliance on outdated military doctrine will be fatal in a general war situation; he is frustrated by the responsibility which he bears for the success of his unit without having control over the many factors that will achieve or prevent that success.

In combat, it must be expected that the division commander will be no less effective than has been indicated by the performance of Chinese Communist military units in the Korean War and during the Sino-

Indian border conflicts. This effectiveness will depend on the effectiveness of the Party and on the political control system it has established more than on the personal characteristics of the commander. Should the political control system fail or break down at any point, and should the leadership responsibility fall directly on the military commander, the degree to which he has permitted political requirements to overshadow his attempts at professional excellence will determine victory or defeat.

#### Outlook for the Future

Speculation as to the direction that the military leadership will take is dependent on aspects so numerous and complicated that little validity can be attached to it. In concluding this study a presentation of some factors that can assist the layman in his informal analysis of the Chinese Communist military leadership might serve to arouse interest in this field.

The system of dual command may have little justification for its continued existence as the number of Party members increases to the point that all military commanders are Party members, properly indoctrinated and loyal to the policies and principles of the Party leadership. Such a condition can be reached through the constant indoctrination to which the younger generation of officers has been subjected almost since birth, and by the isolation of this generation from outside influences. As this condition is reached, challenges to Party supremacy will grow less likely although some conflict will always exist over political control, as the officers become increasingly dedicated to their profession. In reaching this goal, the conflicts which arise will be offset through emphasis on the increased military knowledge of the political officers and by an ever

increasing number of Party members in positions of military command.

With the ascent of a second generation of political leaders, a reconciliation of political demands and military requirements is possible but not to the extent that the new military posture will constitute a threat to the Party supremacy. As the first generation of Party leaders with their outdated military policies, passes from the scene and as their influence fades with the passage of time, the military leaders might obtain a greater latitude in the exercise of command.

The easing of economic difficulties that have plagued Communist China during recent years, and the continued preferential treatment of the soldier will improve morale and increase the loyalty of the soldier to the Party, whether he actually believes the Party doctrine or not. A strengthening of group morale and loyalty will be a prime factor that, together with a program of political indoctrination at which the Communists are so masterful, will sustain the army even in the face of nuclear weapons in the manner which it did against the napalm and artillery fire encountered in Korea.

The possession of a nuclear capability will probably have the effect of strengthening the ties of the military leadership with the Party. Since the denial of access to nuclear weapons brought about by the Party's rift with the Soviet Union was a source of dissatisfaction to the military leaders, the removal of this source of friction and the resumption of technological advance will serve to increase the faith of the military leaders in the government and lessen political-military tensions.

In the emergence of China as an industrial power there will be some conflict of the military with industry as both compete for the

limited number of skilled personnel available. With the importance of industrialization to the resumption of modernization, military leadership may be denied access to the skilled manpower pool as it develops and may have to do with something less than the best qualified personnel while the industrial base is being established.

The reliance on political indoctrination and control in the army for maintenance of the Chinese Communist Party's position of supremacy holds certain dangers. The constant pressure placed on the soldier through propaganda campaigns which urge continually higher standards of performance may eventually lead to a decrease in morale and efficiency if these urgings are not matched with increasing material rewards.

There are many testimonials to the competency of the Chinese Communist leadership that reflect its ability to surmount the most serious threats to its existence--survival of the food crisis of 1959-1960, a condition that may well have triggered any hidden tendencies to overthrow existing political controls; the awareness of the Communist regime of its own problems and weaknesses; and the steps it has taken to overcome deficiencies as they are uncovered. These successful efforts by the governmental leaders have taken place without any great reliance on the military leadership and have provided little opportunity for this military leadership to rise to a position of prominence. Despite the attempts of the army to achieve a degree of autonomous leadership, the subordinated position of the military leader is firmly established, at least for the immediate future. Since the military leadership structure of Communist China has satisfactorily stood the test of combat despite its subordination to political control, it will most likely continue as presently organized.

No one dares to predict the future, least of all the future of a nation such as Communist China with its many mysteries and intrigues. Only as the events of the coming years begin to unfold can the true effectiveness of the Chinese Communist military leadership be known. This effectiveness will be measured by the degree of success or failure when tested on the nuclear battlefield of the future. What measures the Party takes in updating its military doctrine and leadership structure along with the technological advancement of the nation, and the timeliness with which it institutes changes, if required, may well determine the fate of the Communist regime in China.



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